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WOLFMAN & PÉREZ

HISTORY OF THE DC UNIVERSE

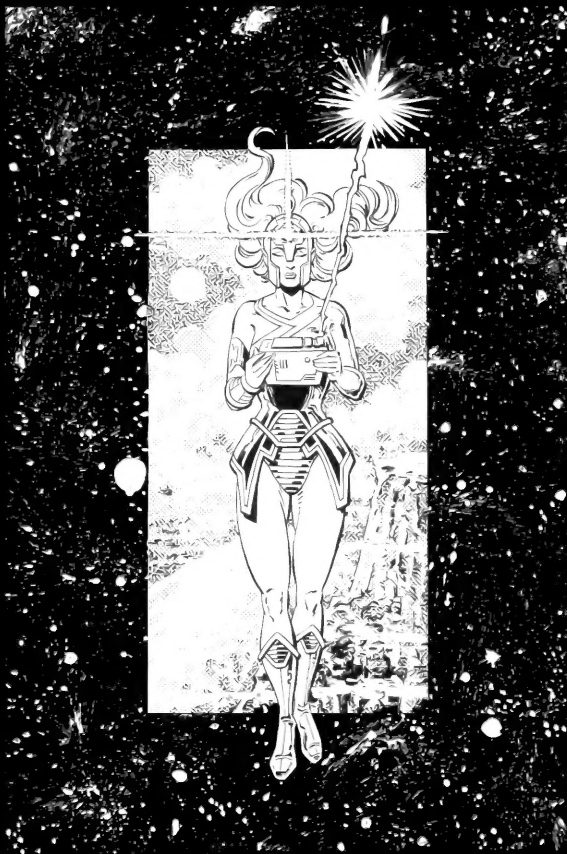
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HISTORY OF THE DC UNIVERSE BOOK ONE
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What began as a single universe grew to become a multiverse in danger of annihilation at the hands of a demonic force. Heroes from many universes banded together and destroyed the evil at the dawn of time, and because of them, the single universe was born anew.

In that rebirth, the histories of planets were changed. I watched the death of the multiverse and the birth of the universe, and I knew these changes must be chronicled.

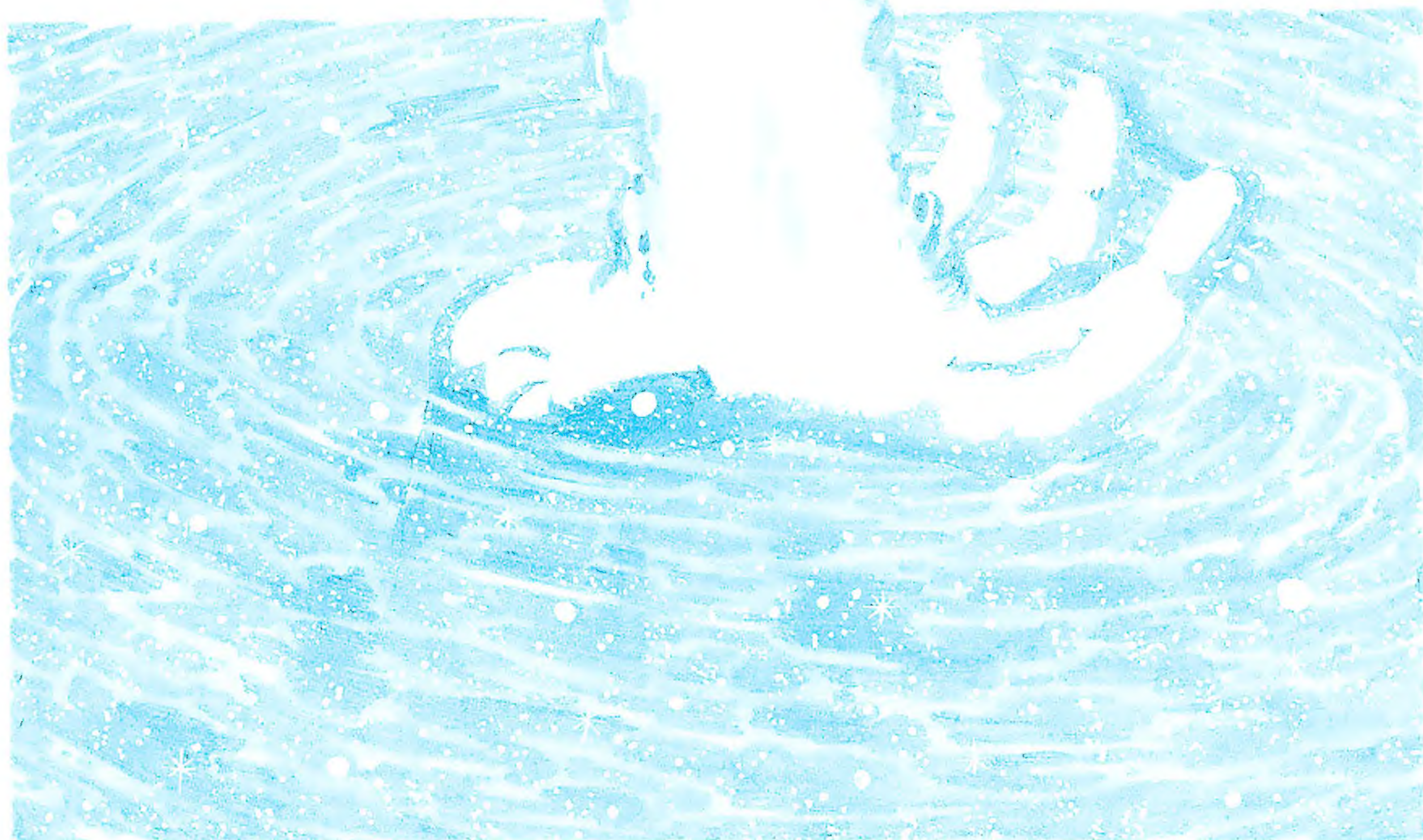
I do this not to enlighten, for no one is permitted to know of the multiverse that had been. I do this because I must, because change must be recorded, and because I must pay my debt to the one who allowed me the privilege of knowing the truth.

He was a being who lived ten billion years. He saw the multiverse born, and he knew of its coming end. He brought those heroes together and led them in their battle against evil, and he died that the universe would live. To him I dedicate this narrative.

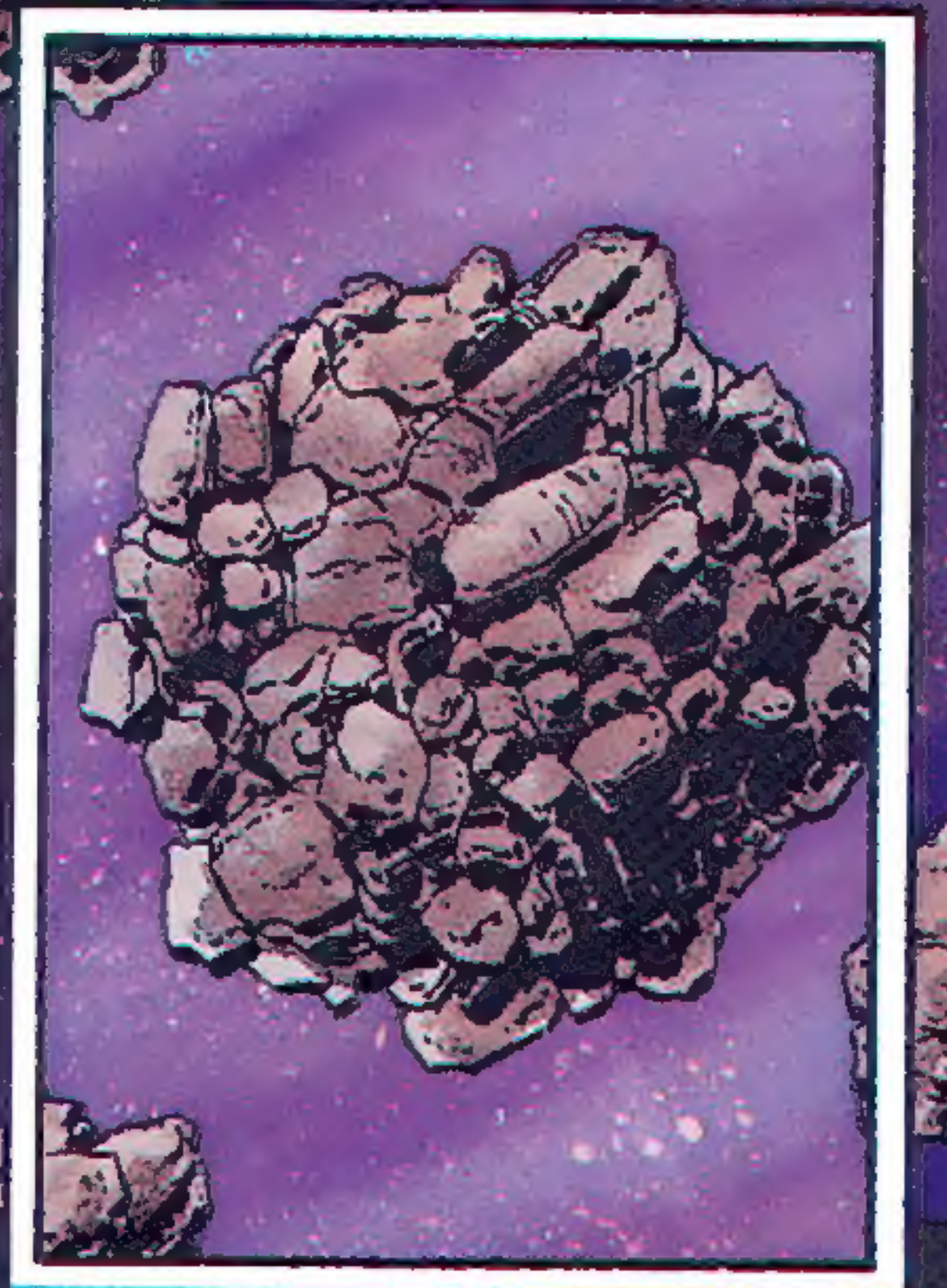
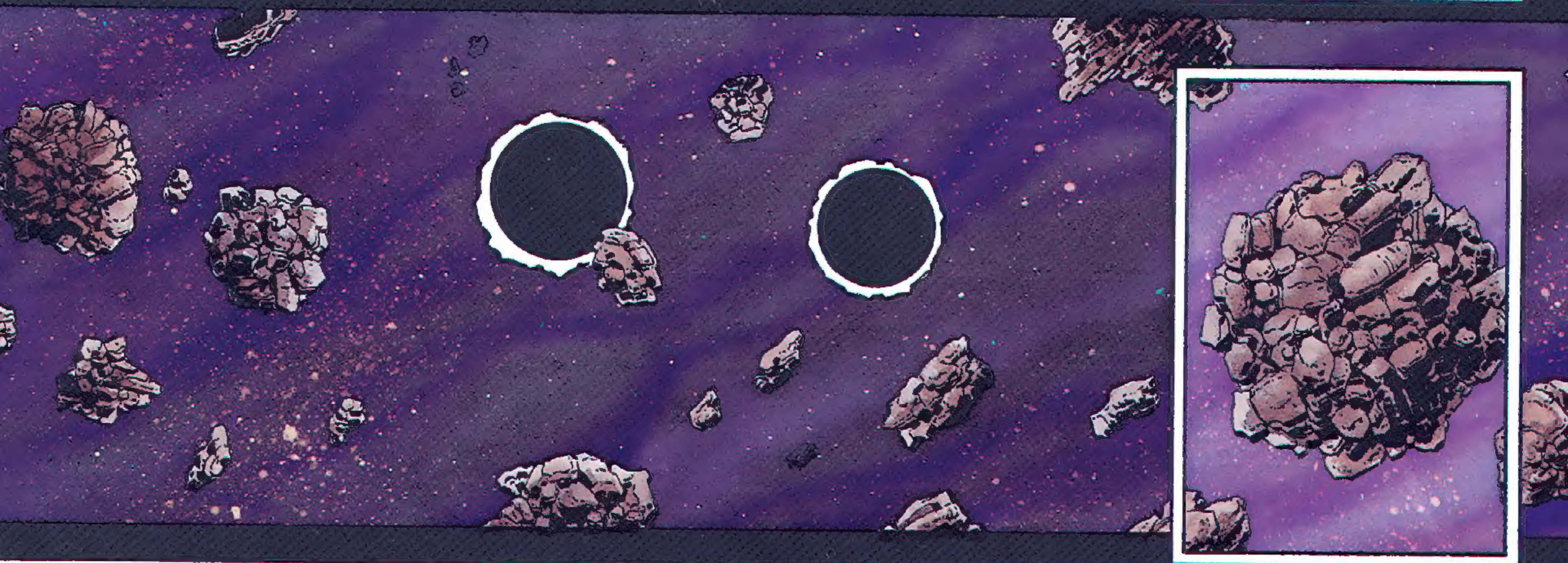
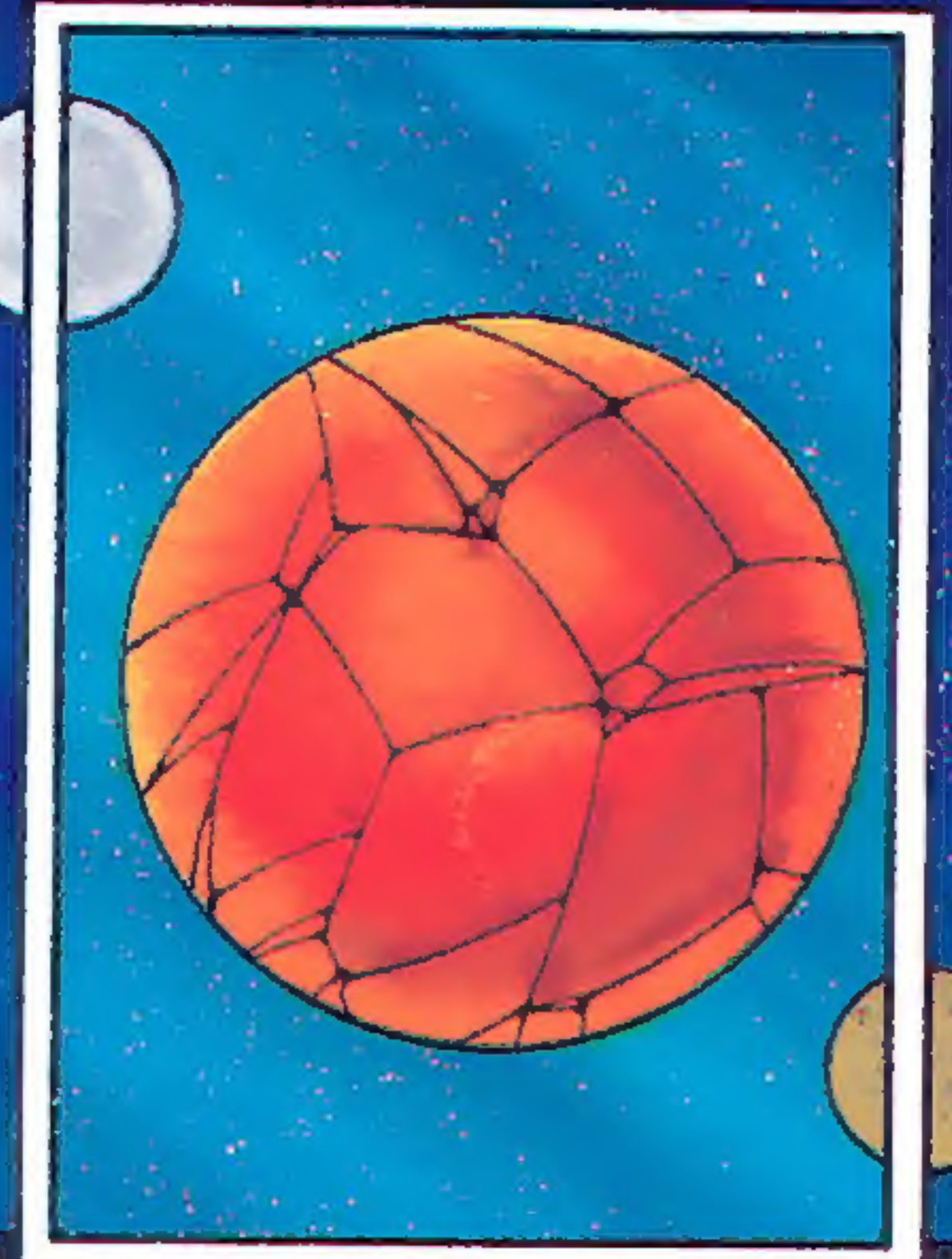
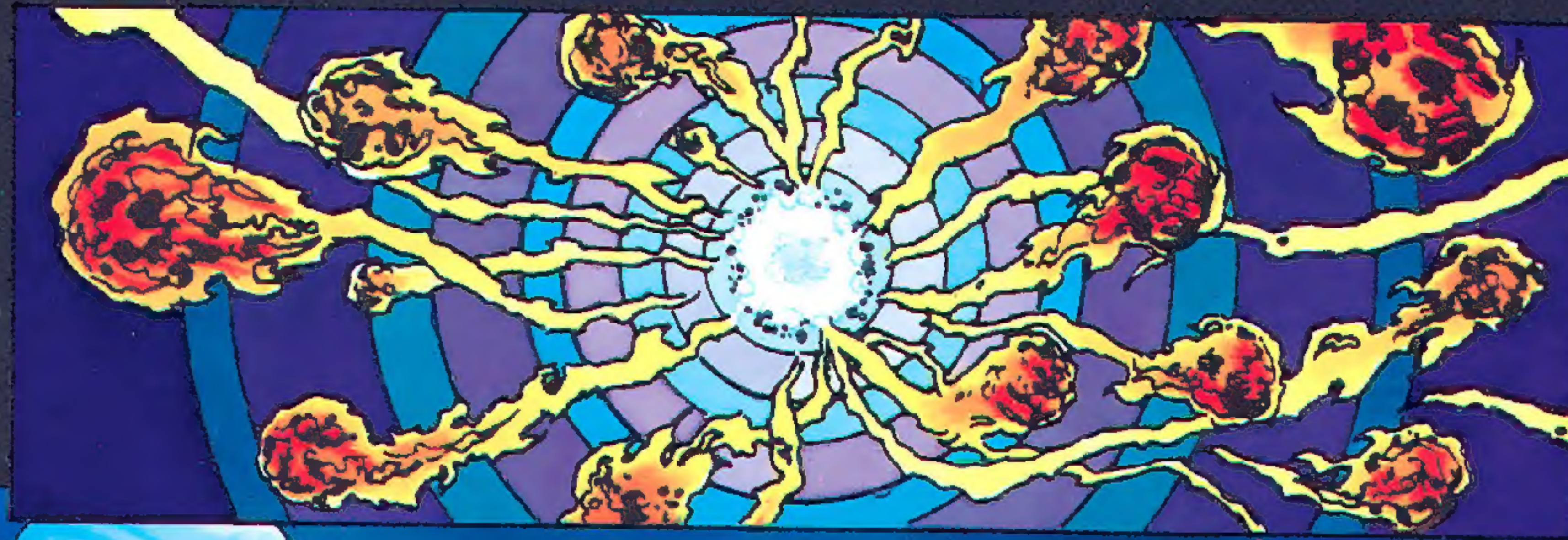
This then is the History of the Universe as seen through my eyes. Its concerns are with those men and women who fought and sacrificed their own lives to save the universe, whose courage and determination altered the past and future.

As for me, I am Harbinger, and it is my mission to gather the truth.

We know the universe was created more than ten billion years ago, formed of vapor and forged with fire. The single will which brought light to the dark, gave substance to nothingness, and created life from unlife, must have permitted itself a sigh of satisfaction when its children wailed in birth.

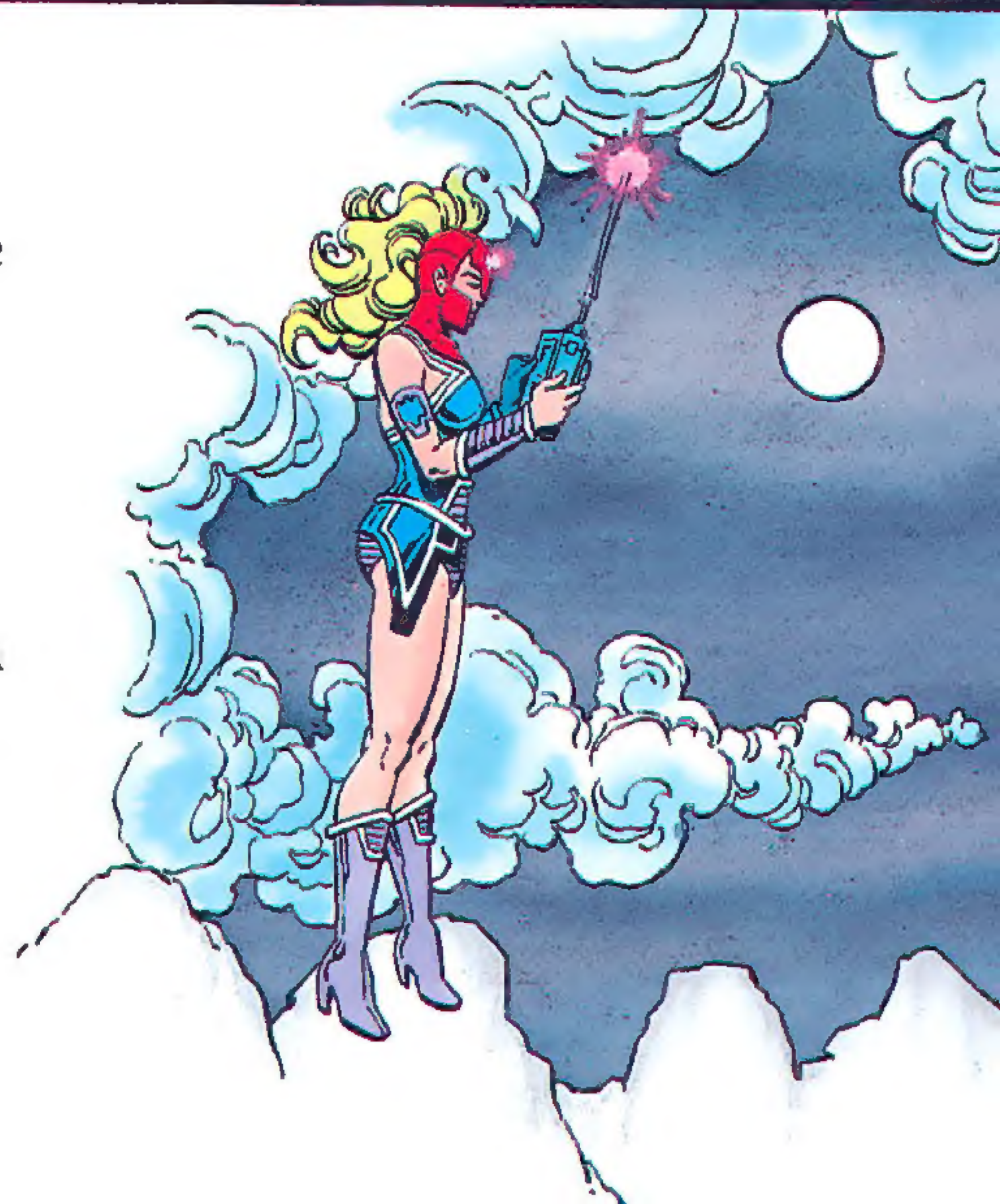


The single will must have been uniquely proud as its children, burning with life and ambition, left their nests to explore the infinity, spreading across a universe that had been nothingness less than a blink before.



Its seeds were scattered on the solar winds. On some worlds, life grew out of plasma. On others, waves of shimmering heat took on an unfathomable intelligence. On fewer than thirty worlds, life developed out of sound; while on more than a million other planets, silicon became life's base.

Twenty million worlds embraced carbon, while three million worlds gave home to sentient light. On one thousand planets, life became represented as intangible concepts. And from each beginning, life evolved into something more—something greater.

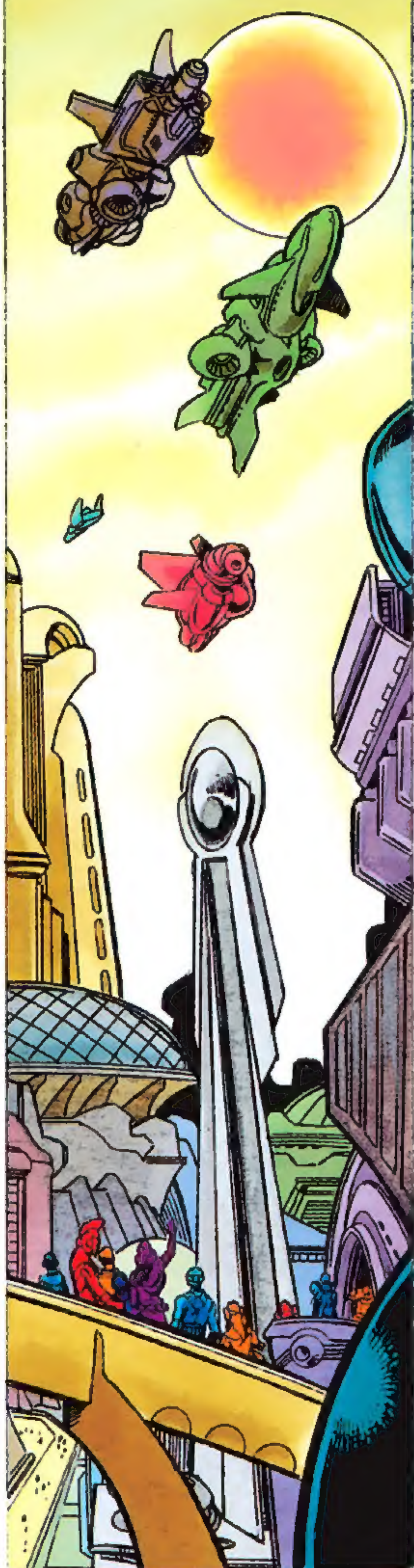


Oa was not the first great power, but it was the first not to be consumed by its own greed.

Colonized by off-worlders from the planet Maltus, Oa was a planet of science and technology that reached the pinnacle of civilization when most worlds were still mired in the first glimmers of self-awareness.



Oans explored not only the stars but their inner selves, developing telepathy and telekinesis to aid them in their quest. Nothing was beneath the Oans' interest, and nothing could remain a mystery for long. Theirs was a planet of harmony, and it remained so for a million years, but the scientist Krona was not content to explore space. He delved into the one area of science forbidden to all Oans: the origin of the Universe itself. Krona ignored the warning that chaos would ensue as he watched time peel away, and the hand of creation reach into the cosmos and pluck that fruit of life.



In that instant he saw it...

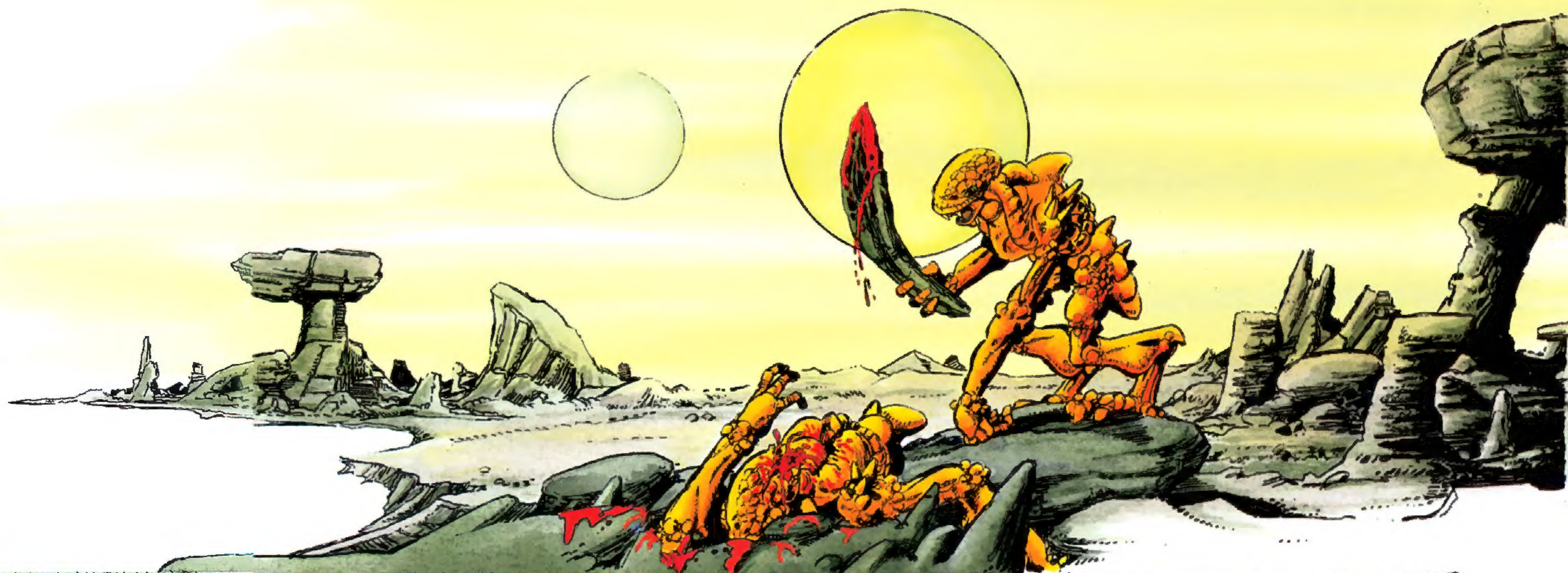


...and the Universe exploded.





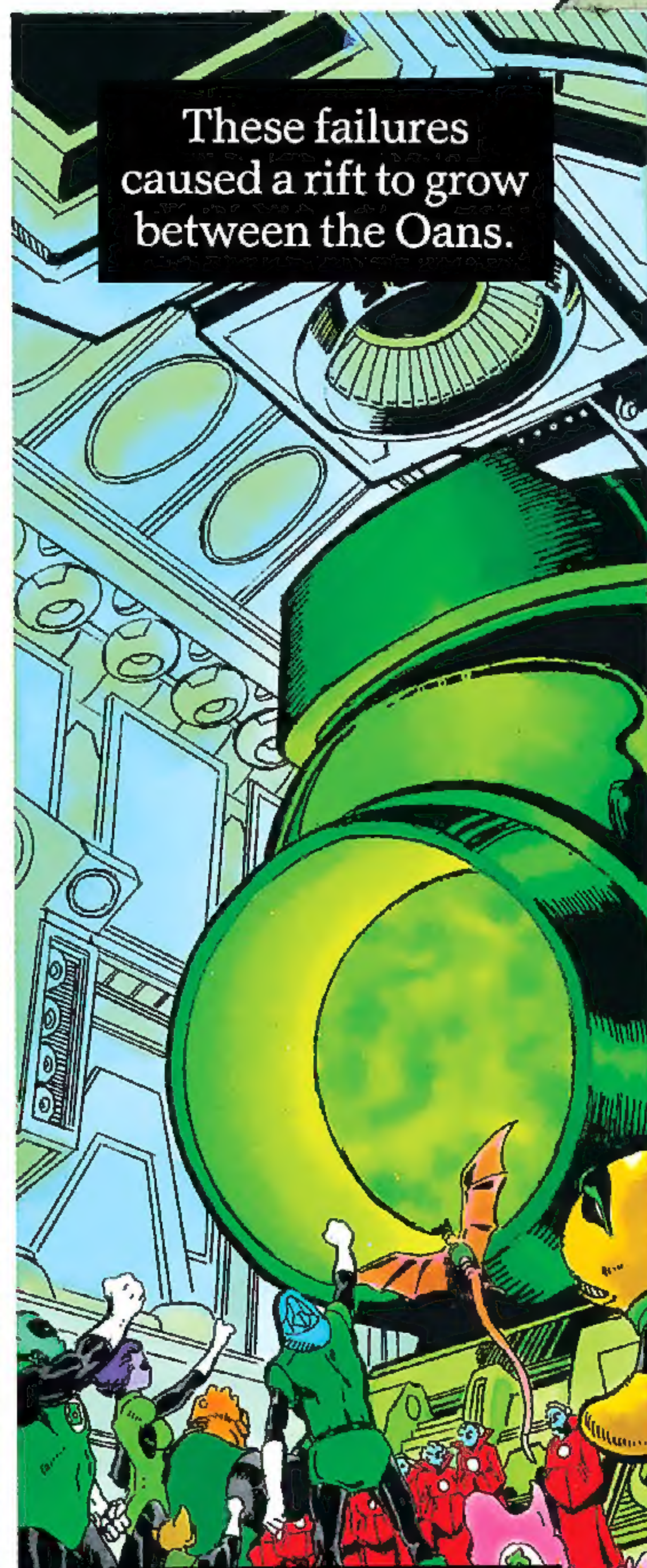
What had been one universe became two—positive matter and anti-matter—and with the unleashing of the anti-matter universe there came a wave of evil that spread throughout fifty million worlds, corrupting what had been a paradise. The Oans saw it as their responsibility to contain the evil that one of them had unleashed.



They experimented to create the perfect warrior. Genetically transformed lizards (which later became known as Psions) were an early failure the Oans abandoned.

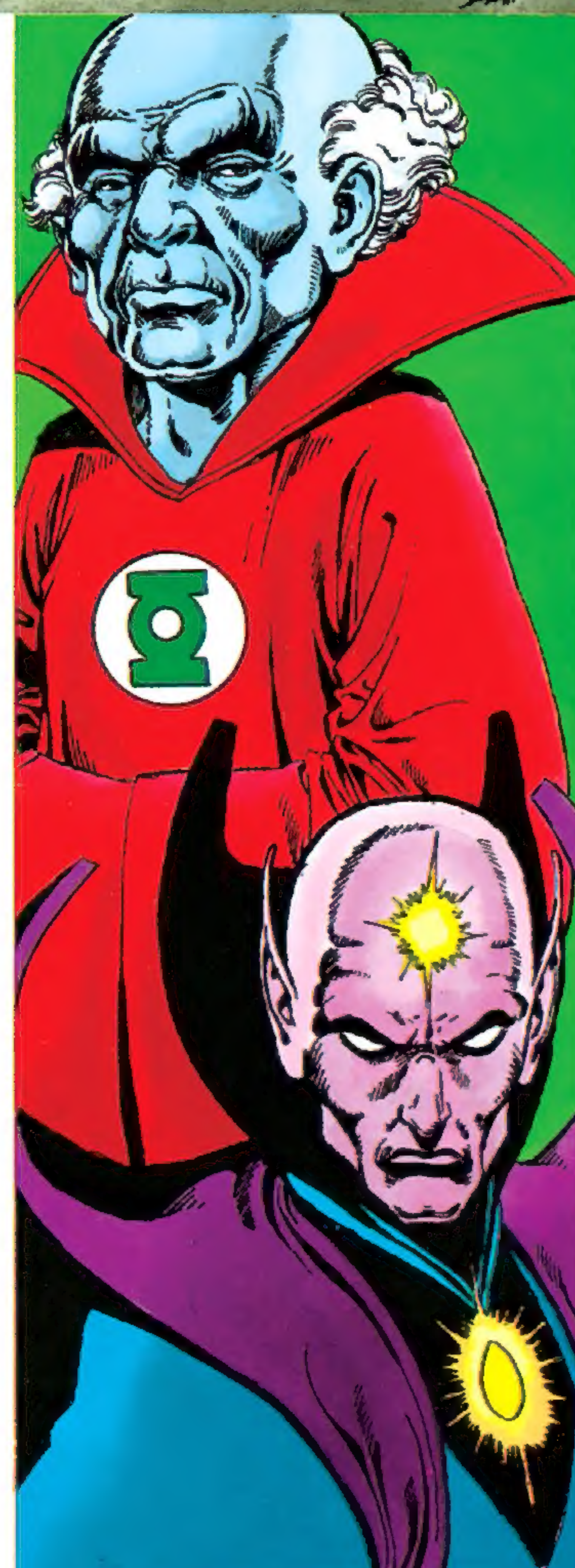


They created a corps of android soldiers called Manhunters which they dispatched throughout the universe to combat the evil. Ultimately, the Manhunters rebelled and their legions disbanded.



These failures caused a rift to grow between the Oans.

The peaceful Guardians assembled the bravest from each sector of space and equipped them with rings of power. The Green Lantern Corps would succeed where others had failed...

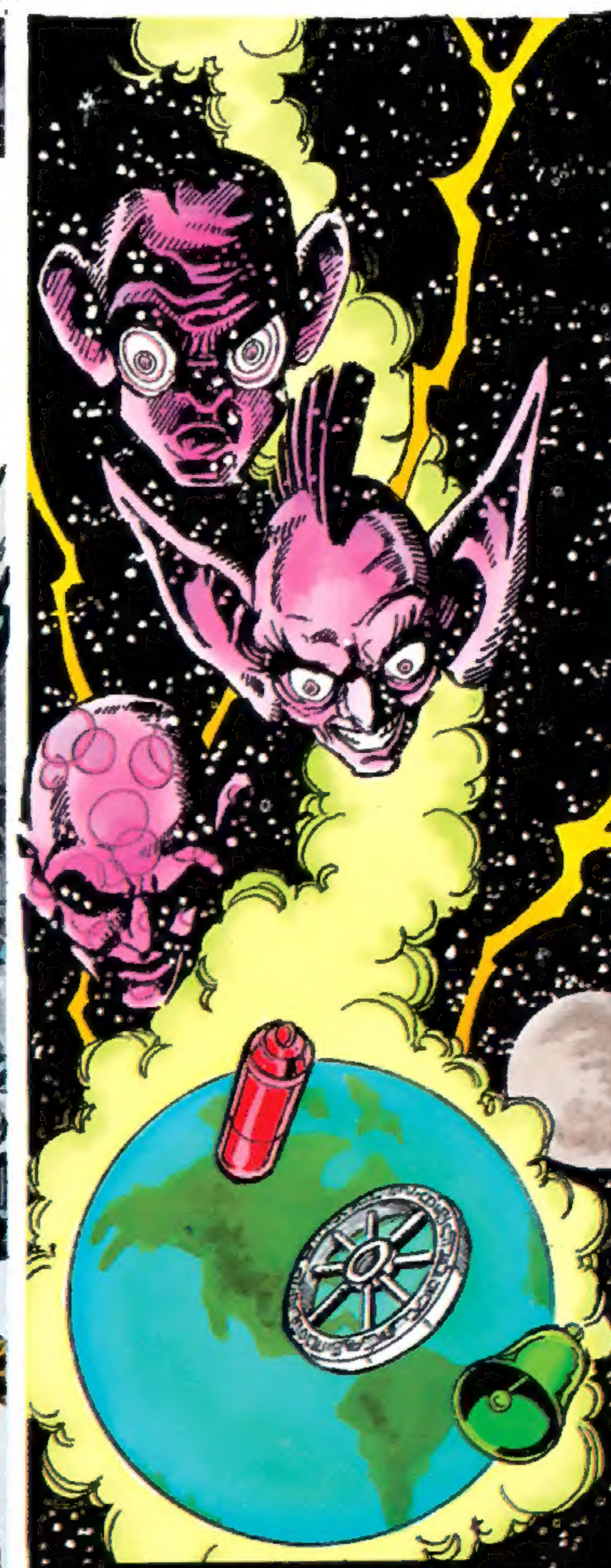


...While the Guardians who believed in destroying evil evolved into the race known as The Controllers.

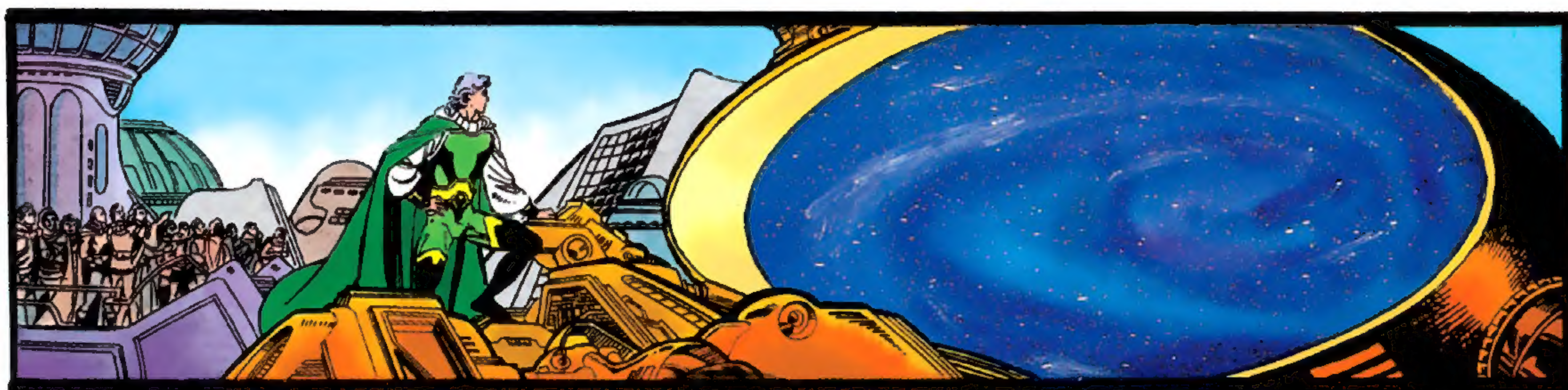


But the Guardians' problems were far from over:

their first experiments had evolved into the dreaded Psion race and had to be banished to deepest space.



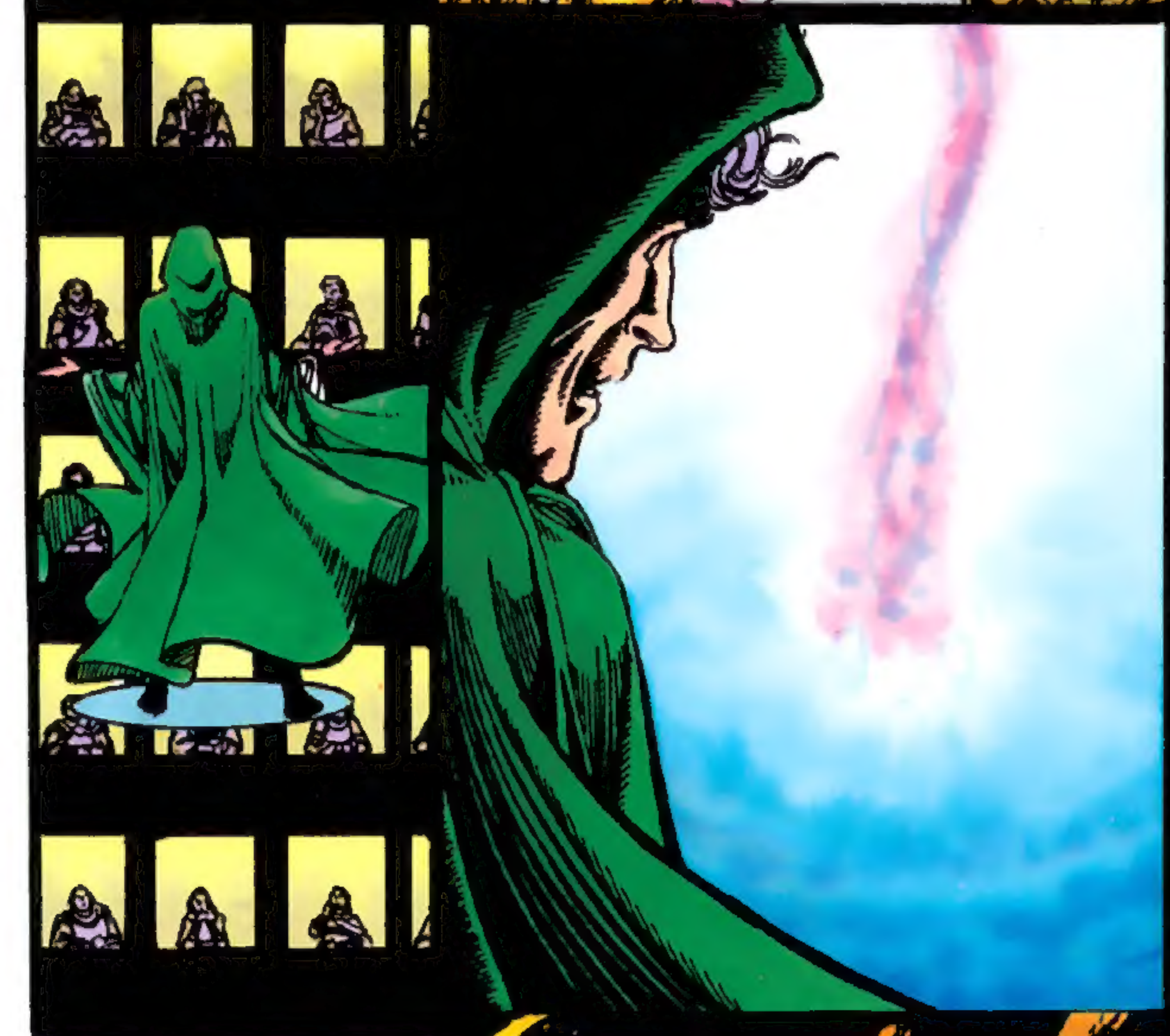
Still, despite the Green Lanterns and the Manhunters, evil flourished and came to infest Earth. The first evil came in the form of demons. They were not the last.

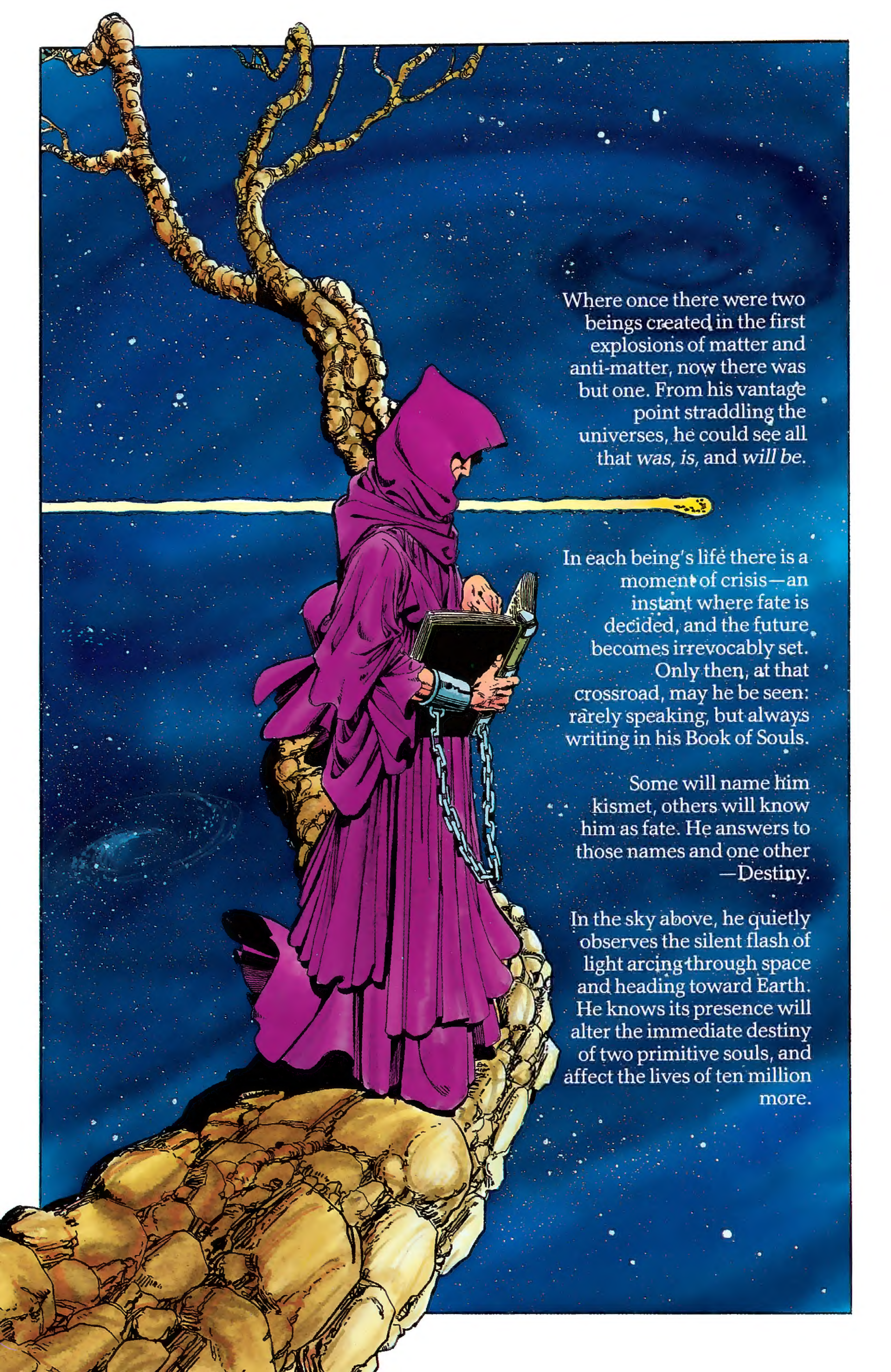


While the Earth was evolving from its primitive beginnings, other planets in other dimensions had grown to maturity. On one, Krona's deadly experiment was duplicated by its leading scientist who watched in awe as the hand of creation drew the clouds of chaos together.

In another time, when the multiverse was in existence, this experiment unleashed a terrible evil that destroyed universe after universe...but in this new universe, no evil was freed from a ten billion-year sleep.

The secrets of creation were peeled away for this scientist who would one day be known as Pariah. For thirteen months he remained in his anti-matter chamber, watching the dawn of time, listening to the first cry of existence, witnessing the birth of that first sentient life, until the single will would let him see nothing more.



A man in a purple robe and hood, chained to a tree, looking at a book against a starry night sky. The man is standing on a rocky outcrop, looking down at a book he is holding. He is wearing a purple robe and a matching hood. A chain is attached to his waist and hangs down. The background is a dark blue night sky filled with stars and a few nebulae. A large, gnarled tree trunk is visible on the left side of the image.

Where once there were two
beings created in the first
explosions of matter and
anti-matter, now there was
but one. From his vantage
point straddling the
universes, he could see all
that *was*, *is*, and *will be*.

In each being's life there is a
moment of crisis—an
instant where fate is
decided, and the future
becomes irrevocably set.

Only then, at that
crossroad, may he be seen:
rarely speaking, but always
writing in his Book of Souls.

Some will name him
kismet, others will know
him as fate. He answers to
those names and one other
—Destiny.

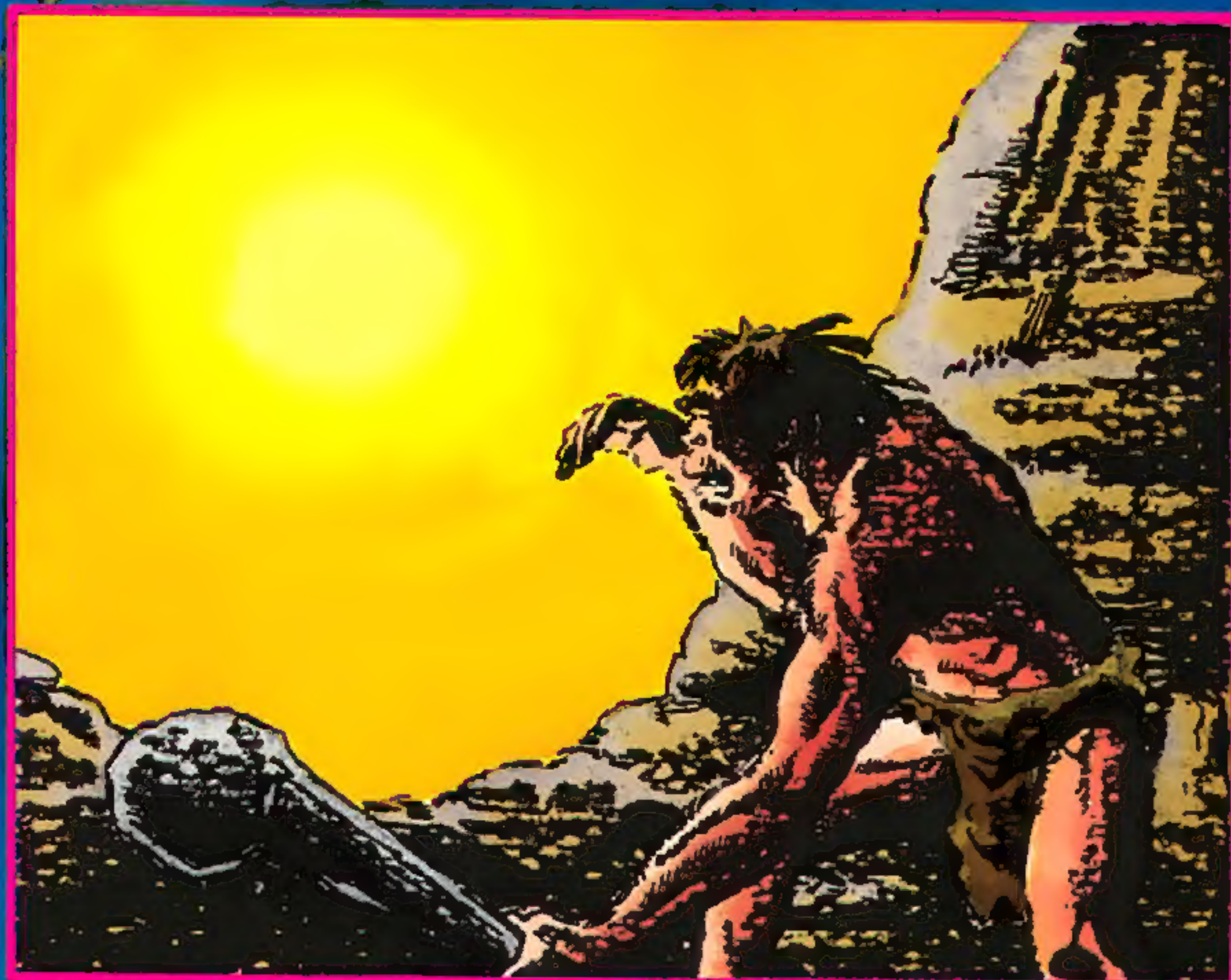
In the sky above, he quietly
observes the silent flash of
light arcing through space
and heading toward Earth.
He knows its presence will
alter the immediate destiny
of two primitive souls, and
affect the lives of ten million
more.

t burns through Earth's atmosphere in the middle of the night, and the Neanderthals who watch the dark skies light up with fire pray to the gods of the earth and sun and moon that this is not the end of all existence.

None of the Bear Tribe dares to approach this shimmering light that has set fire to the fruit trees more than a mile away. Those of the Wolf Tribe hide in the darkness of their caves.

But Vandar Adg of the Blood Tribe, hunting for enemies to slay and boar to eat, stood in the fields as the star exploded before him. Its fire burned through his flesh and reached into his soul. Vandar Adg felt a change his primitive mind was not yet able to comprehend. He was no longer mortal; indeed, Vandar Adg had become Vandal Savage—the Immortal.

Savage's remarkable transformation was observed by another man—the leader of the Bear Tribe who followed his enemy to the light and saw his unexplained metamorphosis. While Savage fled in fear, he cautiously approached the shimmering star and touched it. He, too, was changed. From mortal, he became the Immortal Man. With each death he would be reborn.

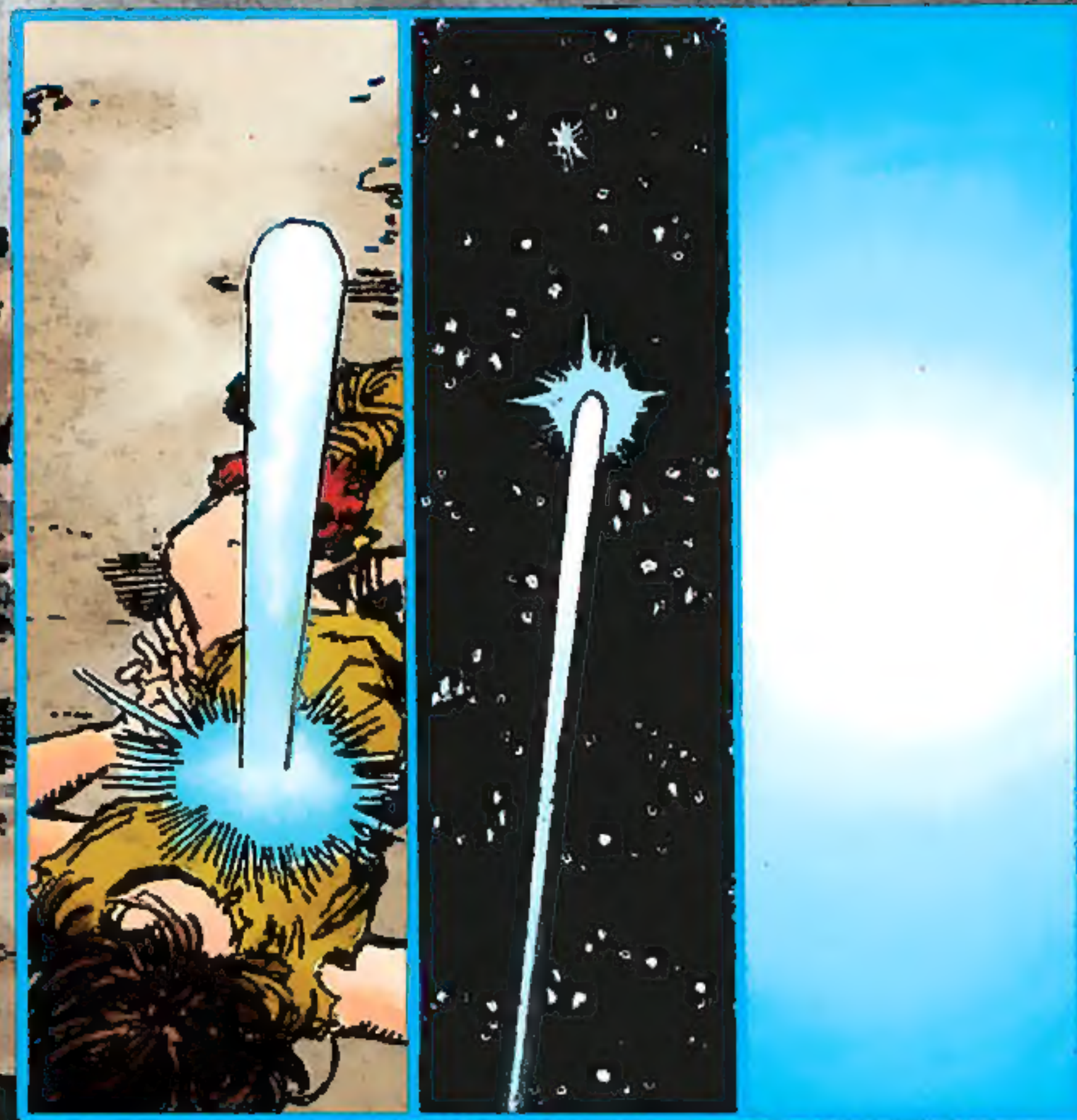


That night, Vandal Savage murdered twelve of his enemies. Still, the blood-hungry throbbing within him was not sated.

These were violent times.
The death of one female
at the hands of a male...

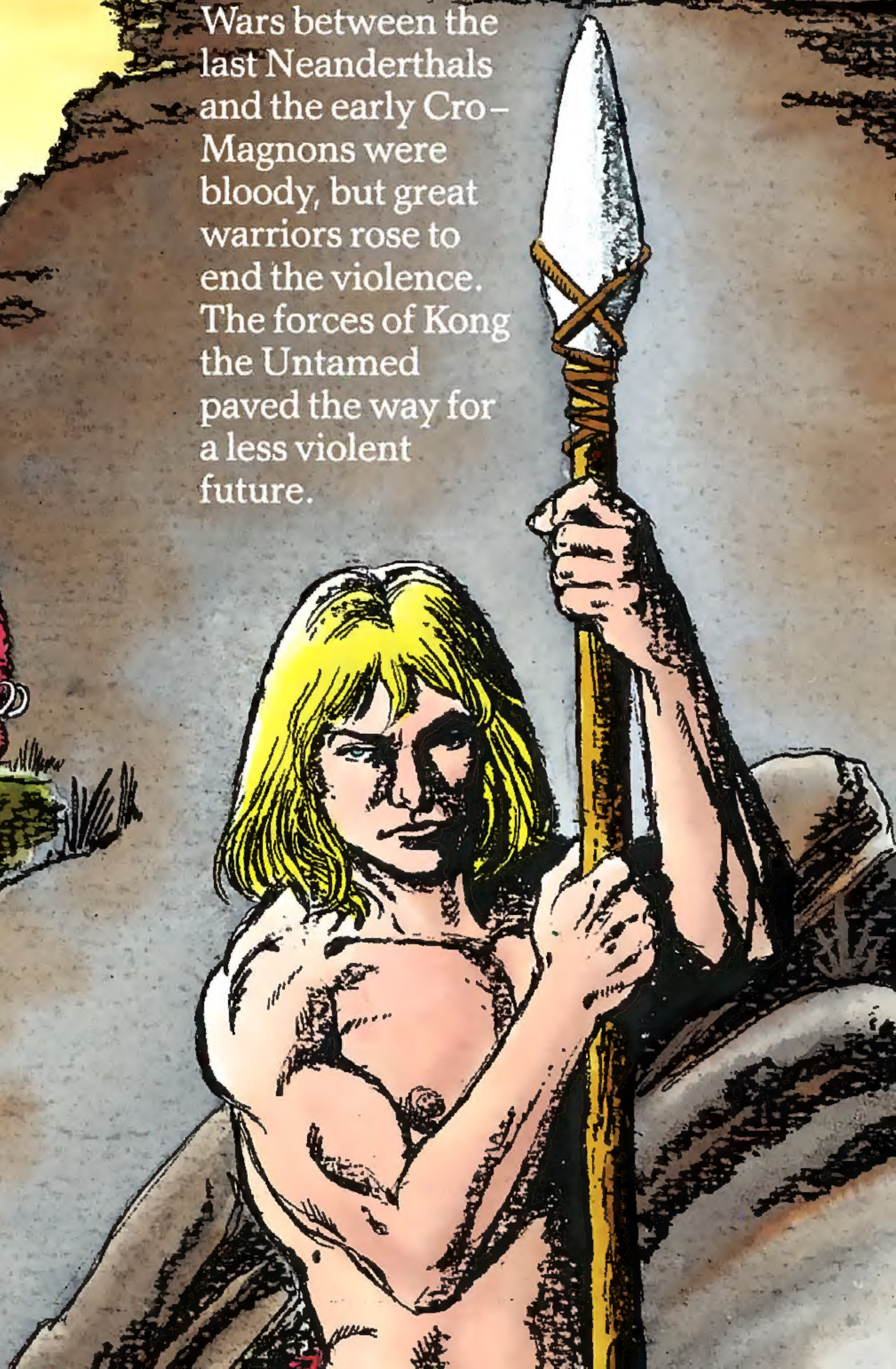
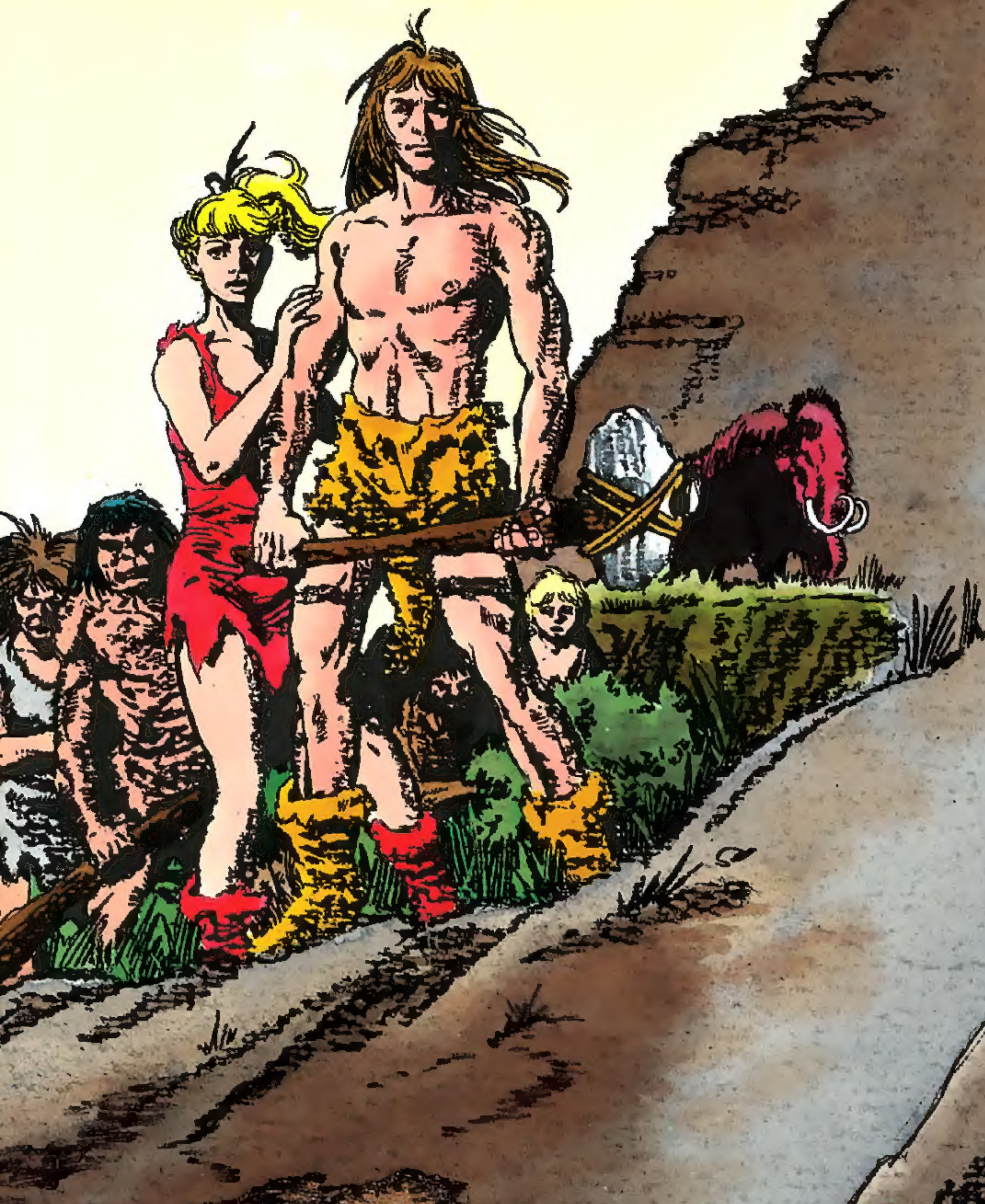
...would have its repercussions
in some far future time.

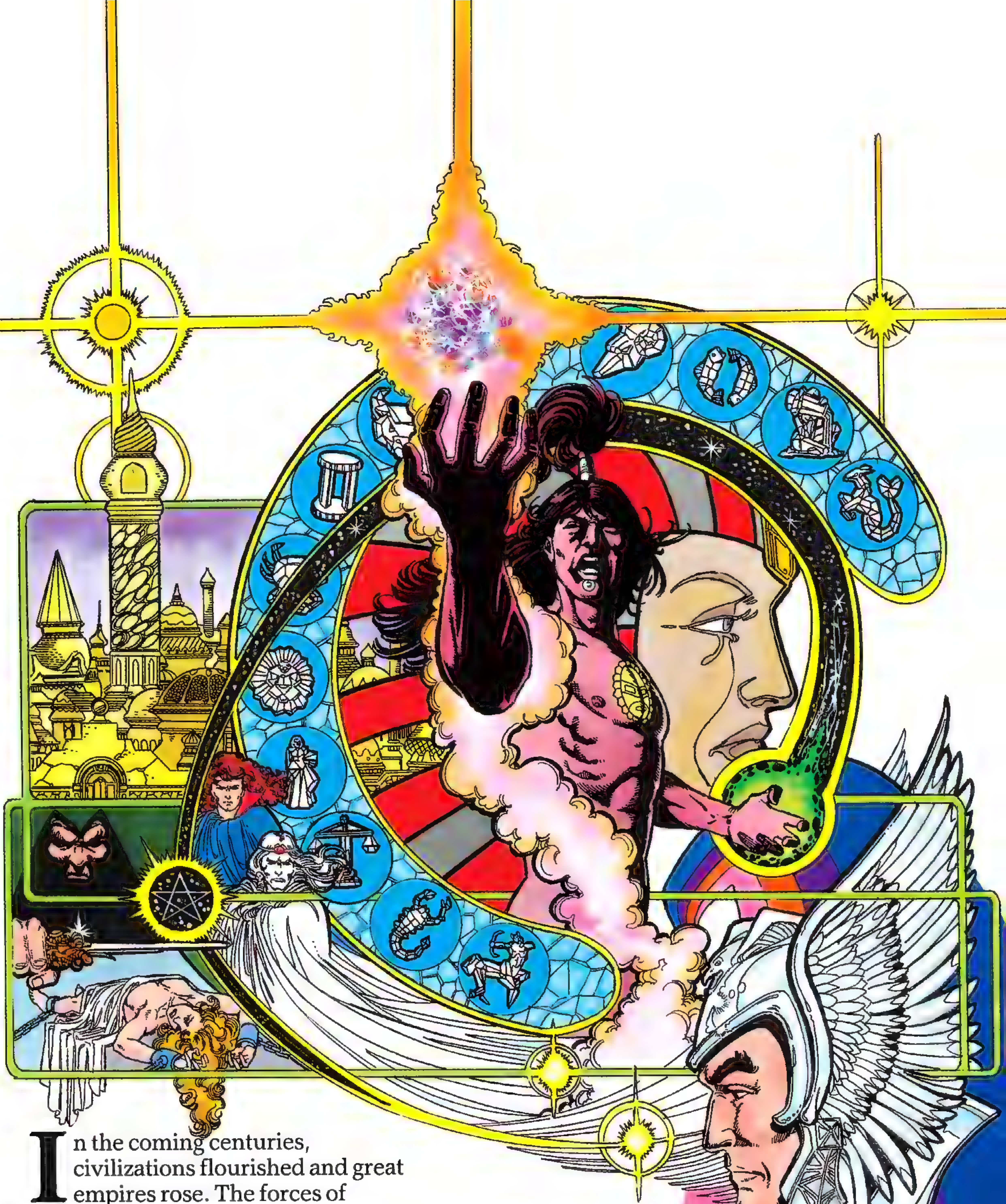
Her body died, but her soul lived
on and would return.



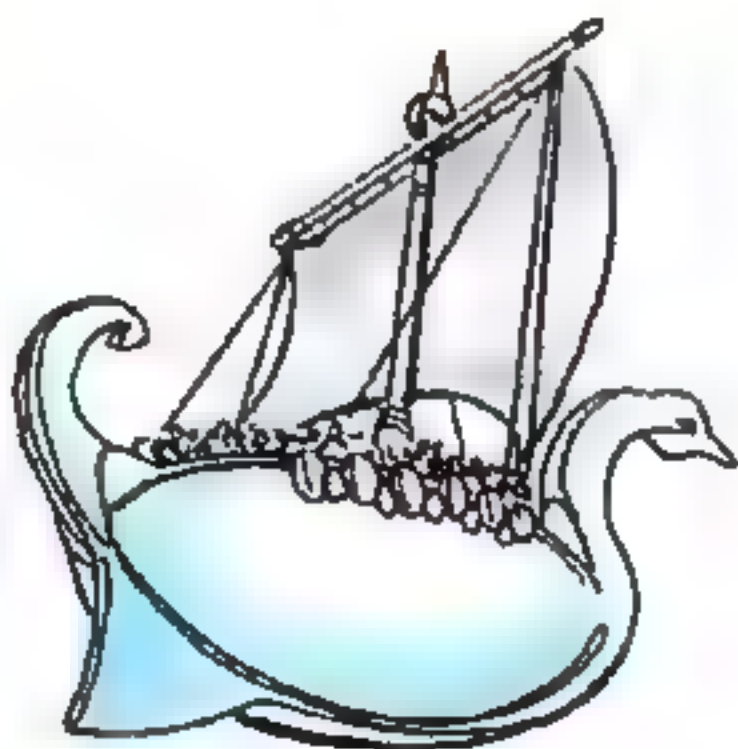
This was also a time for change. The era
of the Neanderthal gave way to the first
Cro-Magnon. The boy, Anthro, led his
people toward enlightenment.

Wars between the
last Neanderthals
and the early Cro-
Magnons were
bloody, but great
warriors rose to
end the violence.
The forces of Kong
the Untamed
paved the way for
a less violent
future.





In the coming centuries, civilizations flourished and great empires rose. The forces of magic took hold over the Earth and then settled in the Kingdom of Atlantis. These were the mystic ages and corrupt sorcerers found themselves in constant battle with the practitioners of science.



Wars between science and sorcery threatened to destroy the island kingdom, and some, fearing for their lives, fled to the seas in ancient Swan ships. One such group discovered the underground caverns which led to Skartaris, the savage dimensional world whose portals lie deep within the bowels of the Earth.



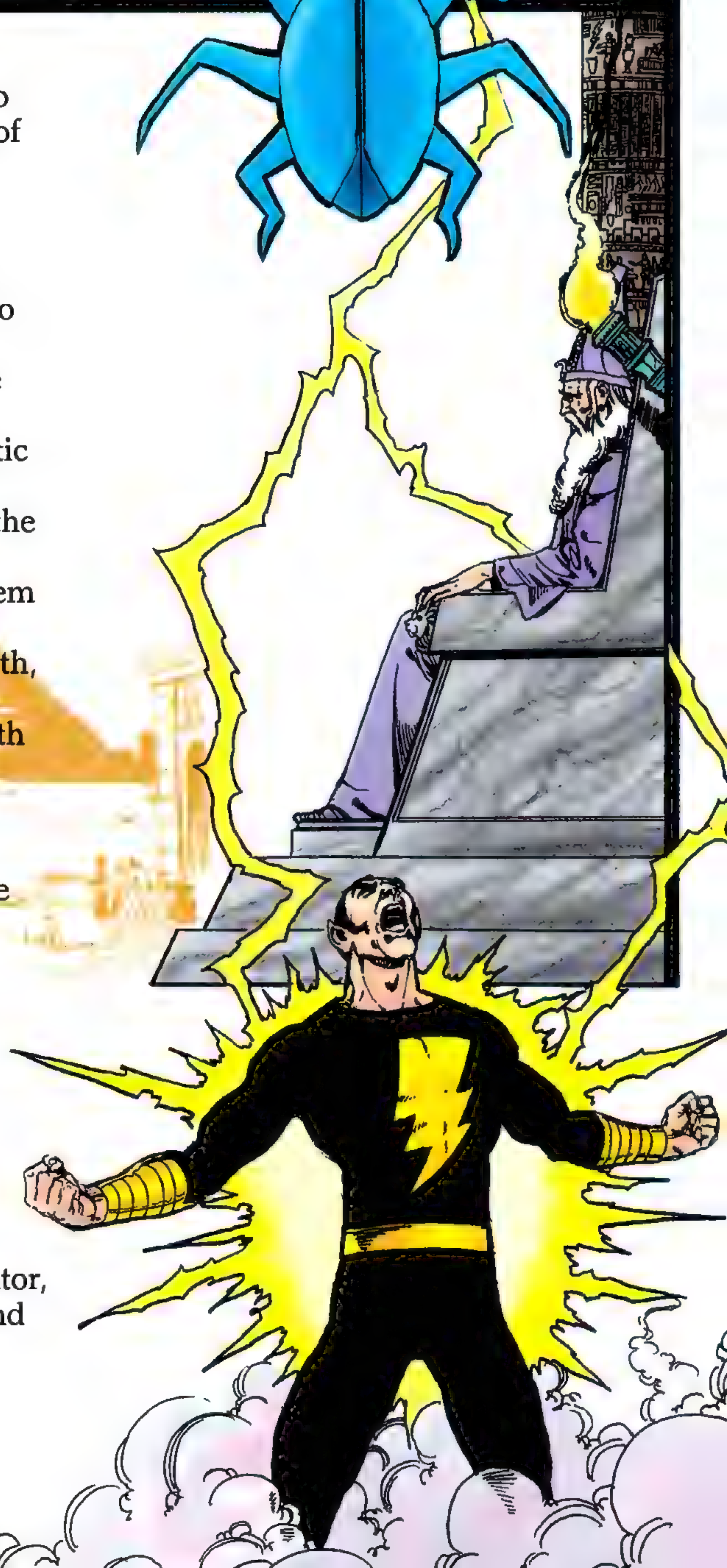
The violence continued on Atlantis, until there came from the sorcerers one called Arion who used his powers for peace. But alien invaders engaged Arion, lord high mage of Atlantis, in a great battle that led to the island's sinking. The Atlanteans were prepared, however, and erected domes around their twin cities of Tritonis and Poseidonis. These twin cities became great underwater lands linked only by their Atlantean ancestry, as the people of Tritonis altered their forms and became merpeople, and those of Poseidonis remained human in form but developed gills to allow them to breathe beneath the sea.

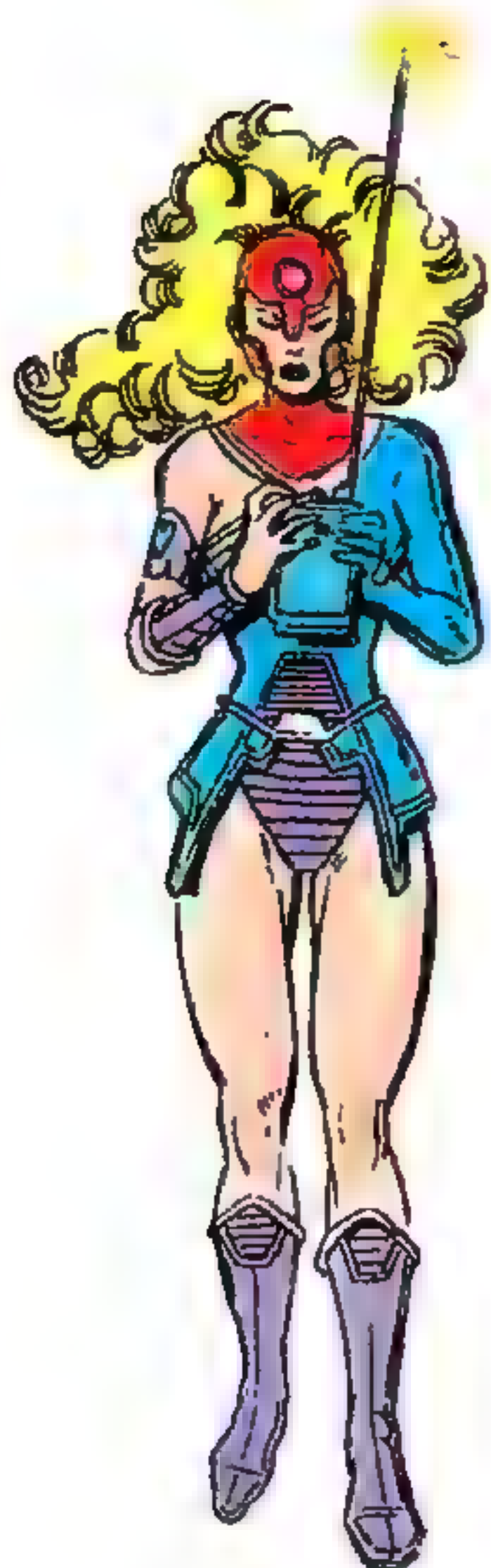


And so the first heroic age came to an end, to be reborn thousands of years and hundreds of miles beyond the site of Atlantis' sinking.

A hybrid bird race, led by Ibis-headed Thoth and falcon-headed Horus, came to Egypt before the birth of the great dynasties, and served as advisors before the coming of the Pharaohs. Leaving Egypt, the bird race migrated to the Arctic where they founded the hidden city of Feithera. Sorcery returned in the era of the mad Pharaoh Kha-ef-re. Forged from sorcery and science was a blue scarab gem which bestowed upon its wearer extraordinary powers: incredible strength, the gift of flight and the ability to form energy bolts. This scarab was buried with Kha-ef-re and rediscovered more than four thousand years later.

Of all the wizards in ancient Egypt, none was more powerful than the ancient, noble wizard Shazam. He seemed eternal in age and limitless in power, but even Shazam's existence was finite, and so the mage turned to his disciple, Teth-Adam, and bestowed on him great powers. But the power corrupted the student, and Teth-Adam became evil and turned against his people. To them he was now Black Adam. Only the power of his mentor, Shazam, could defeat the mad wizard and banish him from Earth to roam the Universe, seemingly forever.



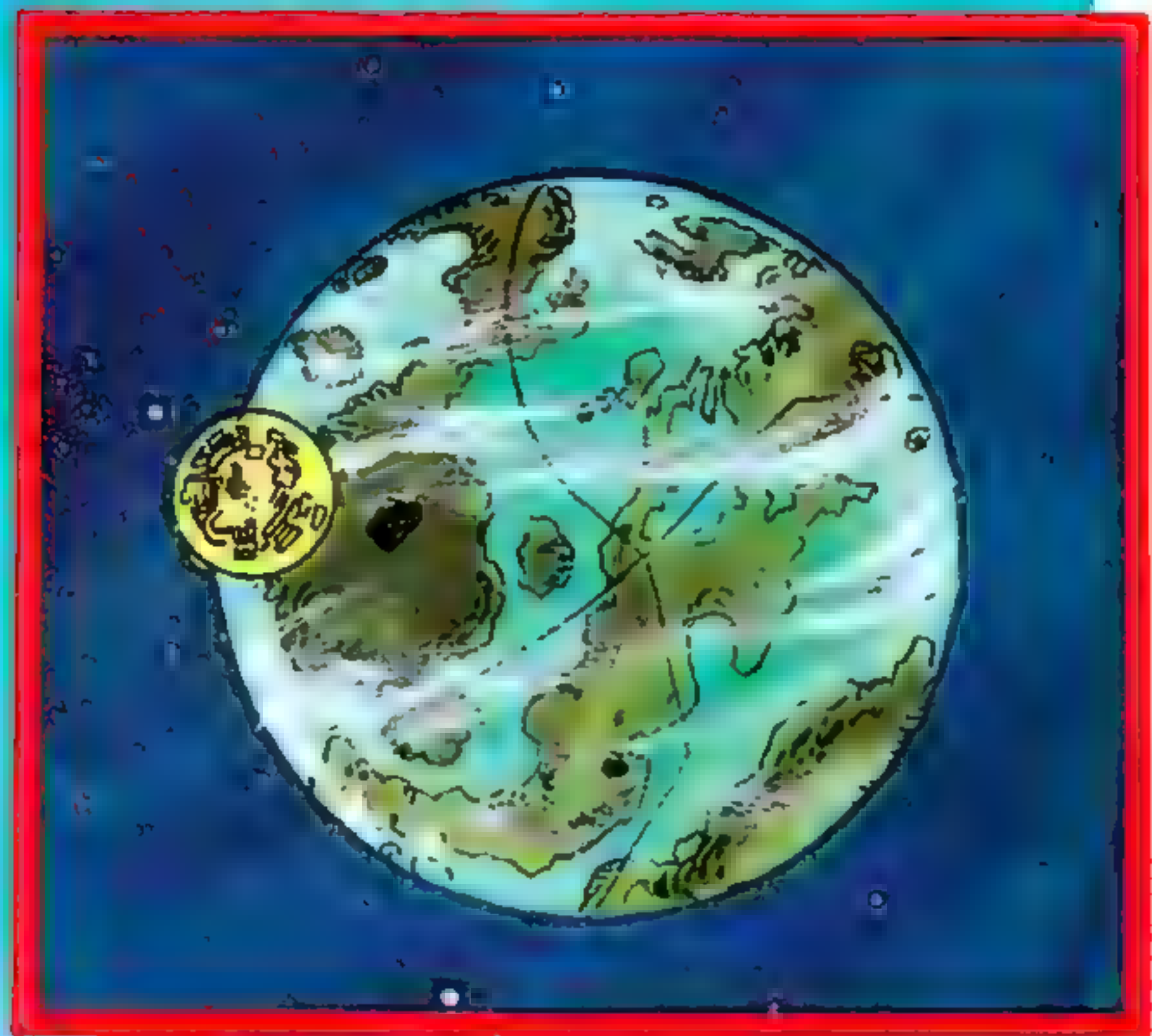


A thousand years passed and the mad priest Khalis rose to power. Nabu, one of the Lords of Order who had forged the powerful Amulet of Anubis, came to Egypt to challenge Khalis' rule and overthrew him. Four centuries passed before the Hyksos, the Shepherd-Kings, ruled Egypt. Khufu was a great warrior who tried to overthrow the evil Hath-Set, but in so doing, Khufu and his wife were slain. Yet their battle was not at an end—in three thousand years all three would be reincarnated as enemies. Other events on other worlds conspired to affect Earth's Heroic Age. The first of these worlds was created by a race of gaseous beings called the Sun-Thrivers who drew matter from far galaxies and formed a huge red star, but the star was unstable, so the Sun-Thrivers created planets out of solar matter, using their gravities to stabilize the turbulent sun storms, and a solar system was born. Of all the planets circling that red giant, the most powerful was Krypton. Belief in the god Rao led the Kryptonians to peace, and with peace came incredible advancements in the sciences and humanities.



On Earth, it would be a thousand years before the Greeks rose to power, spreading their armies throughout Europe and conquering nation after nation in the name of the all-powerful Gods of Olympus. The Gods--in legend the spawn of the dark infinity called Chaos. From Chaos came Gaea, Erebus and Night who in turn spawned Day. From Gaea was born Uranus, the sky. Then, with a smile of satisfaction, she gave us the mountains and the sea. It was from Gaea and Uranus, mother and son, that the Titans were born. They were twelve such Titans: Hyperion, Crius, Oceanus, Coeus, Iapetus, Cronus, Thea, Rhea, Mnemosyne, Phoebe, Tethys and Themis. Also from Uranus and Gaea were born the Cyclopes and the hundred-armed, fifty-headed monsters. When Uranus saw his children, he was repulsed by their ugliness, and banished them to the depths of the Earth. Gaea plotted with her son Cronus and, with a deadly sickle, the son attacked the father and cast his blood to the sea. From Uranus' blood was born the deadly giants and the evil Furies, and from the sea was born the Goddess Aphrodite. Cronus and Rhea brought forth six children. Learning from an oracle that one of his children would overthrow his father, Cronus took his children and swallowed them one by one, with the exception of his final son, Zeus, whom Rhea had hidden away in safety. Upon reaching adulthood, Zeus made a pact with the Goddess Metis who forced Cronus to vomit up the Gods he had swallowed. Then Zeus led his fellow Gods into battle with the Titans and defeated them after a long and bloody war. Zeus banished the Titans to the depths of Tartarus and claimed Olympus in the name of the Gods. The Titans once again attacked Olympus, and their battle lasted more than ten years and nearly destroyed the Earth in this second battle of the Gods; the rivers burned and the sky crashed to the ground. Powerful as they were, The Titans were again defeated, but this time they were encased in rock and returned to Tartarus as immobile statues. And so the Gods of Olympus rested, thinking their days of warring over at last.





The old Gods tired of battle. With a burst of impossible energy, they sealed Olympus off from all outside contact and created in its wake two giant molten bodies. For centuries they cooled and then finally gave birth to life. New Genesis—a magnificent new world of hope—became the home of the New Gods, the powerful race imbued with the living atoms of the original gods. On the barren, burning scar of a world called Apokolips was born the demon Darkseid and his legions of hell. These two forces are locked in an eternal battle with no end in sight.



Growing as a fierce race of people in the Vegan System, the Psions kidnapped the Okaaran X'hal and mated her with a fearsome, brutal Branx warrior. From this came the birth of two children: a horribly mutated being who became the first Citadelian, and the human child, Lambien. The Psions tried to mate X'hal a second time, but she slew the Branx warrior even as he killed her. The Psions took her lifeless body and, in a vicious experiment, converted her into a being of pure energy. At that moment, she became the goddess X'hal; Lambien shared much of her power and later metamorphosed into the near-God Auron.

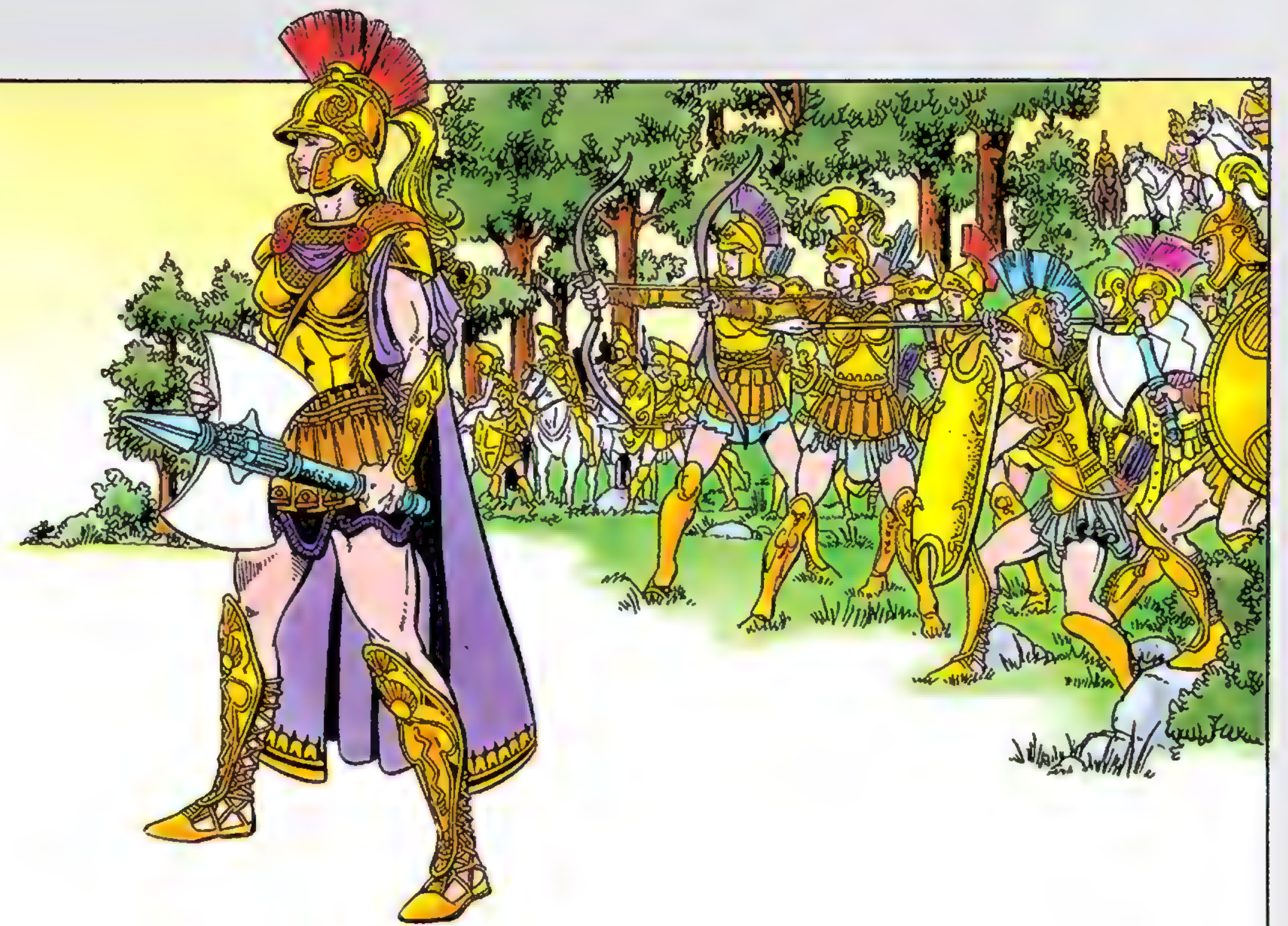


X'hal's other son, the being who had become the first Citadelian, joined with his creators, the lizard-scientist Psions, and together they conquered Vega's twenty-five worlds before the sole Citadelian turned on his allies and claimed power for himself alone. Using Psion science, X'hal's son cloned himself, and with his new force would control the entire Vegan system for more than two hundred years.



A thousand years had passed since the great Egyptian dynasties fell to ruin. Vandals ransacking the tombs of the Pharaohs stole the ancient histories, some never to be recovered. Guided by the Gods of Olympus, Greece rose to power; her armies were undefeatable, and among

the greatest warriors were the invincible Amazons. The Man-God Heracles came to Hippolyte, Queen of the Amazons, to take the girdle given to her by Athena. Hippolyte welcomed the Man-God to her home and her heart.



Heracles drugged Hippolyte, stole her girdle and imprisoned the Amazons. The Queen escaped and freed her people, and together they attacked Heracles' army. After the battle, Antiope, sister to

Hippolyte, journeyed to Athens with half of the Amazon warriors to further avenge themselves on Heracles. There they would fight the great Trojan wars.

Hippolyte, guided by the Goddess Athena, led her Amazons through uncharted waters parted by the sea-god Poseidon, risking their lives until, at last, through the clouds that blanket the Bermuda Triangle, they founded Paradise Island. It is said that the Gods, led by Zeus himself, came to Earth and lay waste to our world. A great war was played out on the battlefield before it was learned these were not the Gods but ravagers from another world.

The Gods returned to Earth many times, but eventually forsook our planet for the grandeur of Olympus. Still, there were tales of the Gods' return...



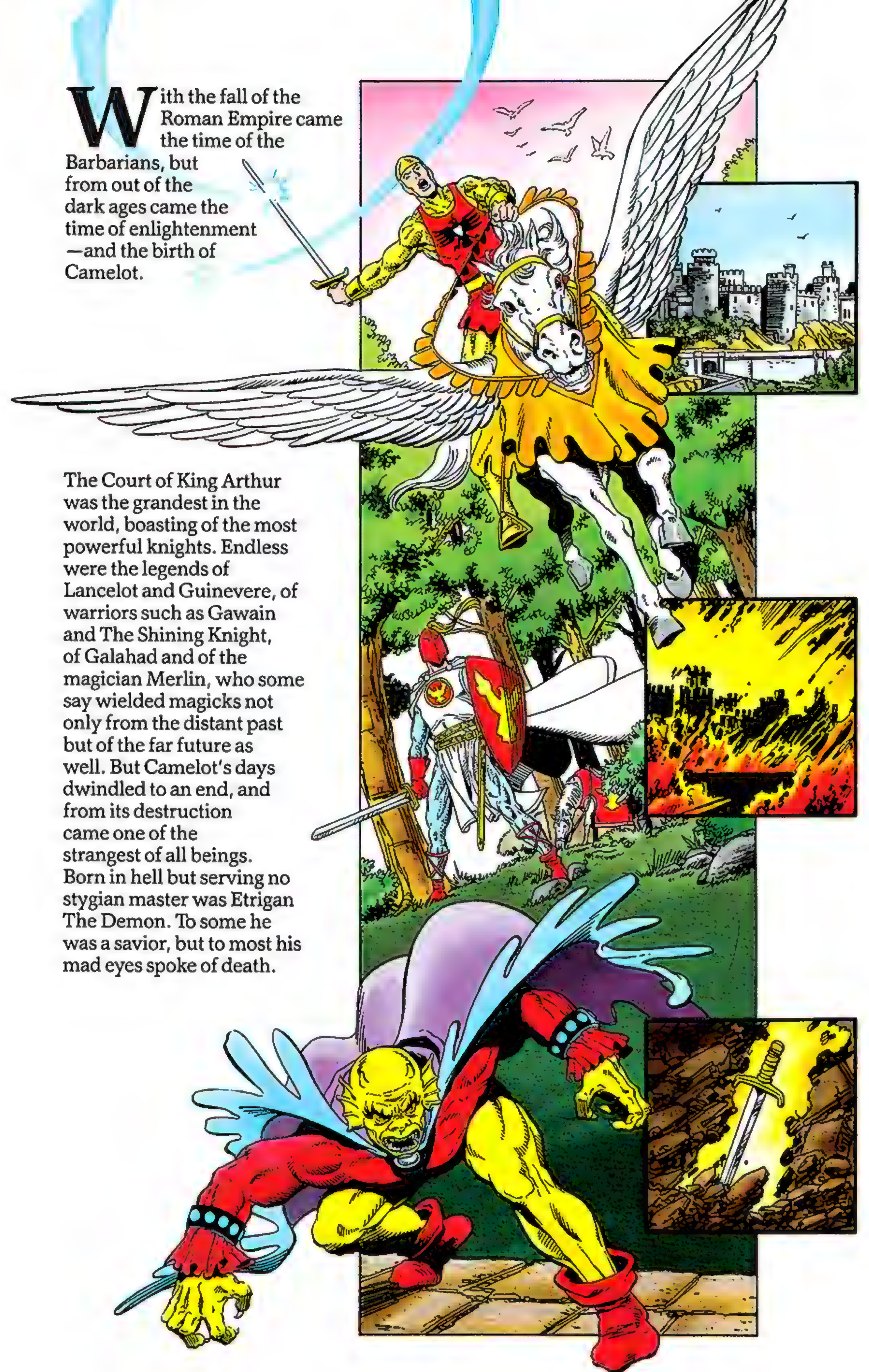


While the grandeur of Greece slowly faded to the glory that would be Rome, the focus of this tome of heroics must shift to the mountains of Tibet. On a dark night the skies of Tibet glowed like an emerald as a meteor burning with verdant light crashed to Earth and shimmered with a power never before seen. In two thousand years a battery of power carved from this meteor would be found, and with it a new hero would be born.

Rome became the center of man and his activities. Here there was a greatness that dwarfed the Greeks and the Egyptians. Great gladiators fought in combat to achieve the precious medals of the Caesars. No warrior was greater than the Golden Gladiator. He could not be defeated in battle, nor could his soul be corrupted by evil. And there was evil—the great demon priest of the ancient Druids was Blackbriar Thorn. He spread his terror throughout Rome until the legions swept in after him and slew his mindless cult, but Thorn used his powers to transform himself to wood and eluded his vengeful pursuers. Free, the Priest turned his powers on his fellow Druids, but in their death they buried Thorn in an Earth fissure where he would not be discovered for twenty centuries.

With the fall of the Roman Empire came the time of the Barbarians, but from out of the dark ages came the time of enlightenment—and the birth of Camelot.

The Court of King Arthur was the grandest in the world, boasting of the most powerful knights. Endless were the legends of Lancelot and Guinevere, of warriors such as Gawain and The Shining Knight, of Galahad and of the magician Merlin, who some say wielded magicks not only from the distant past but of the far future as well. But Camelot's days dwindled to an end, and from its destruction came one of the strangest of all beings. Born in hell but serving no stygian master was Etrigan The Demon. To some he was a savior, but to most his mad eyes spoke of death.

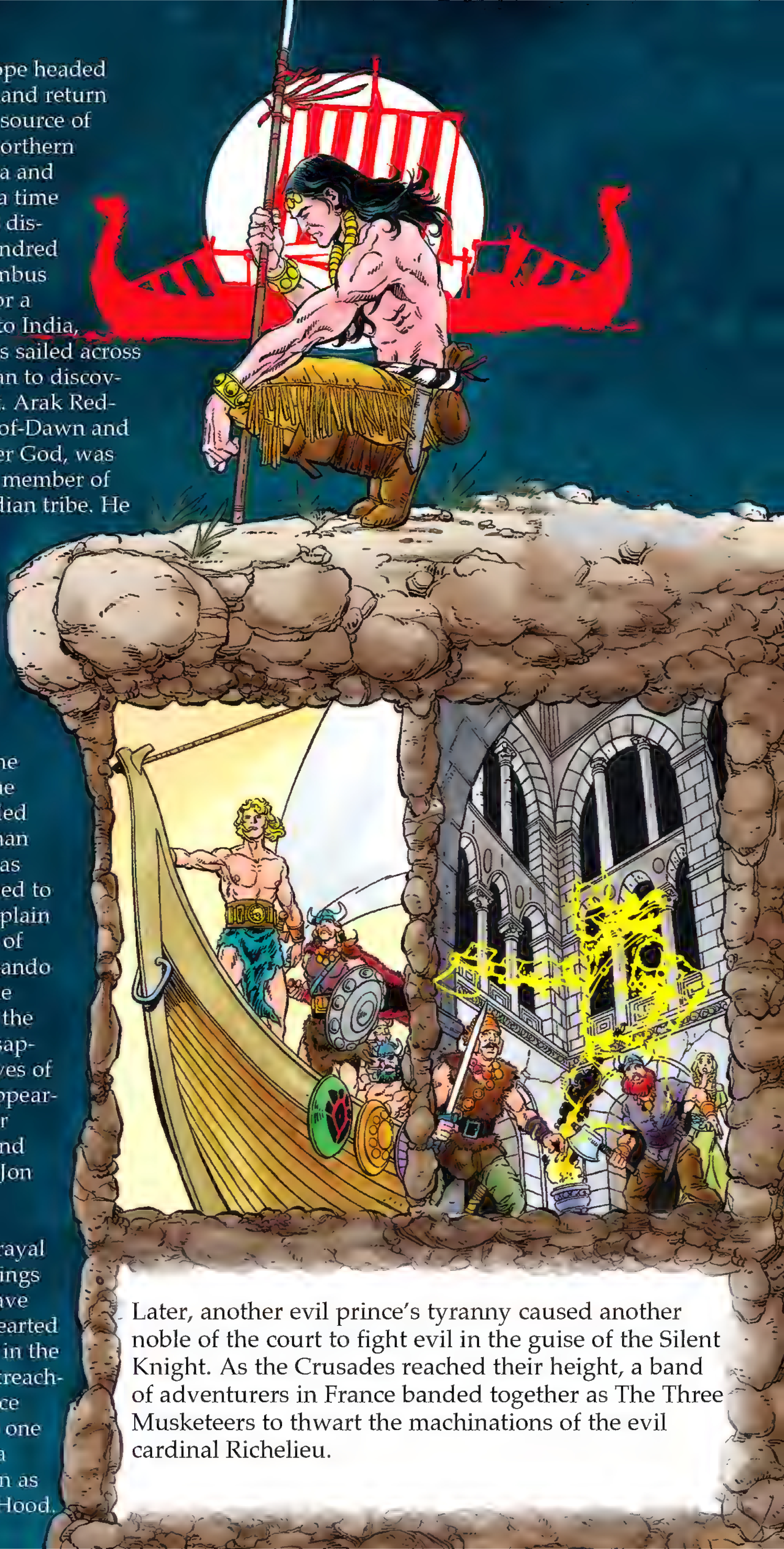


While central Europe headed for its renaissance and return to supremacy, the source of heroes shifted to northern Europe, to America and beyond. This was a time of exploration and discovery. Seven hundred years before Columbus searched in vain for a short trade route to India, proud Viking ships sailed across the uncharted ocean to discover a new continent. Arak Red-Hand, son of Star-of-Dawn and He-No the Thunder God, was the last surviving member of the Quontauka Indian tribe. He was taken by the Viking raiders to medieval Europe where he served in the defense of Carolus Magnus, also known as Charlemagne.

This was also a time of danger as Jon the Viking Prince battled menaces both human and supernatural, as sorcery had returned to Earth. Sorceries explain the disappearance of The Viking Commando Valoric—as had the Viking Prince and the Shining Knight disappeared from the eyes of man—and his reappearance centuries later during man's second world war, as did Jon and Sir Justin.

After Arthur's betrayal and death, other kings ruled England. Brave Richard the Lionhearted carried his banner in the Crusades, but his treacherous brother Prince John's tyranny led one nobleman to lead a band of Merry Men as the outlaw Robin Hood.

Later, another evil prince's tyranny caused another noble of the court to fight evil in the guise of the Silent Knight. As the Crusades reached their height, a band of adventurers in France banded together as The Three Musketeers to thwart the machinations of the evil cardinal Richelieu.



Mount Michelson: a ship from the stars buried itself in this Alaskan peak. Inside, its pilot remained in suspended animation for almost eleven hundred years.

Hidden in the Tibetan mountainside is the famed land of Nanda Parbat.



As sorcery waned on Earth, the wizard-leaders of the 12 cities of Gems focused all their power into the young witch, Citrina, in order to find them a new and proper homeland. To do so she forged an alliance with the Dark Lords and created the other dimensional land of Gemworld.



In the last decade of the fifteenth century there were many events of note: America was officially 'discovered' by Christopher Columbus seven hundred years after the abduction of the Indian Arak. In the

Vegan star system the villainous spider-cult first spread their reign of terror. In Africa, an intelligent simian race erected the fabled Gorilla City and hid it from the ever-prying eyes of man. In space

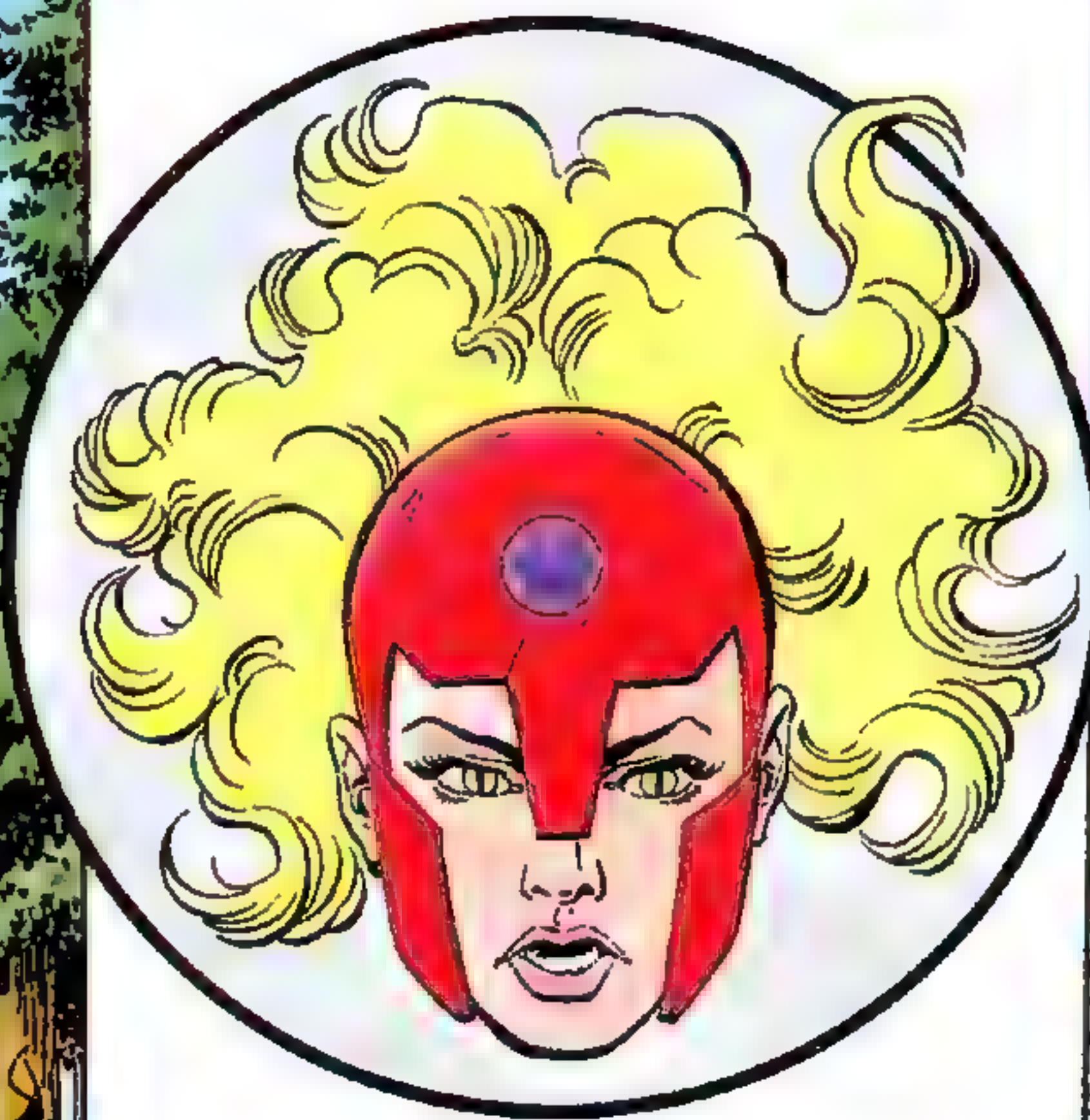
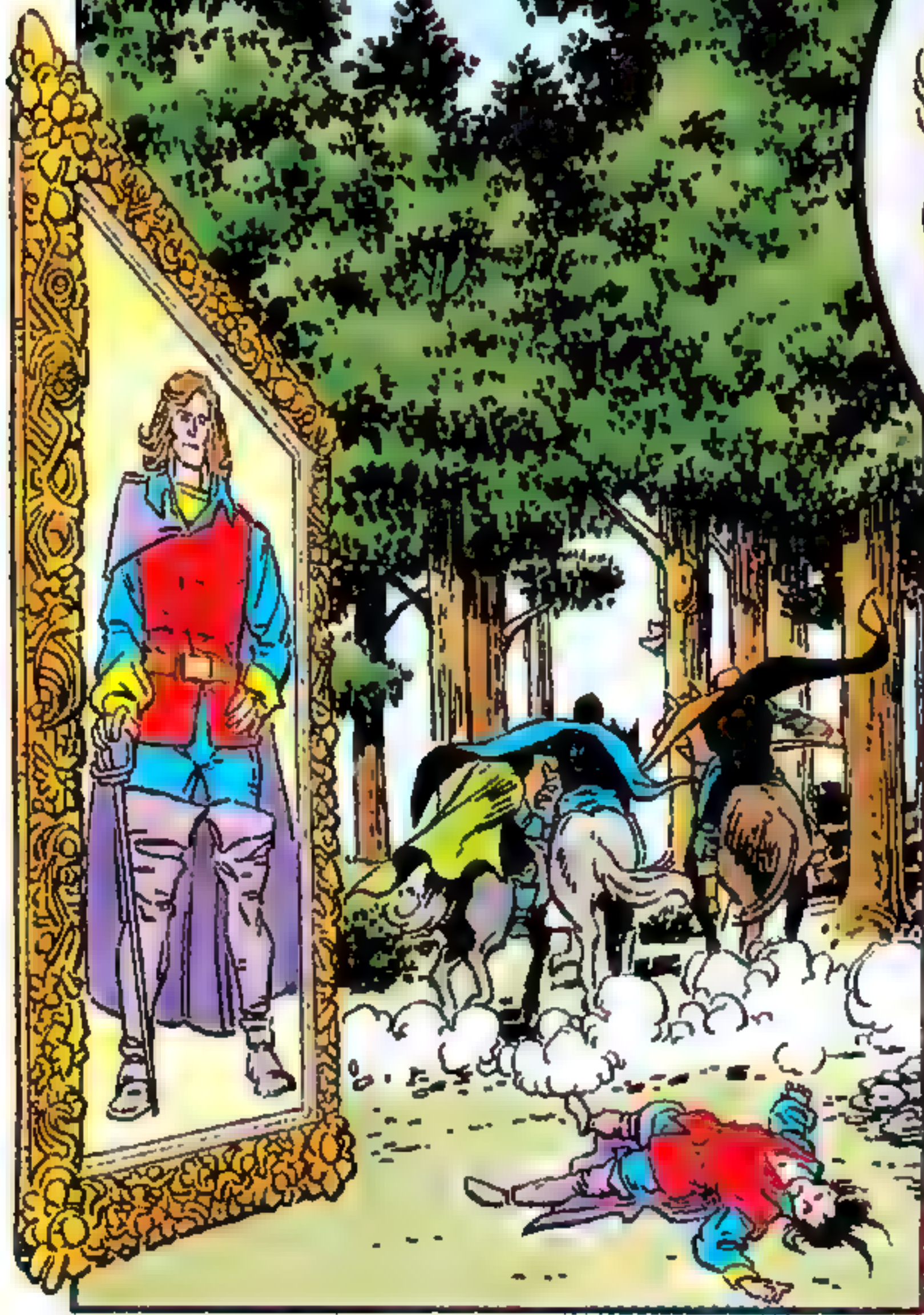
and on Earth, the android Manhunters perverted their original mission of eliminating evil into the hunting and destruction of all sentient life, establishing a cult in pursuit of their goal.

Sixteenth century Europe was in turmoil and wars erupted out of corruption and politics. British nobleman Jon Valor, also known as The Black Pirate, assembled a band of fellow freedom fighters to protect the innocent against tyranny.



These were times of violence and horror, from the iron-fisted rule of despots to the bloodthirsty growth of vampirism, but one such undead sought to save the world from others of his kind. In dying, Andrew Bennett spent an eternity to save the living.

Bennett was not the only man to die and be reborn: Keith Everet, Earl of Strethmere, was slain by thieves but returned to earth as the Grim Ghost to avenge all evil.



Man has always fought the forces of evil no matter the personal risk. Fero, Chief of the Carib Indians, became the legendary Captain Fear to battle his Spanish foes.

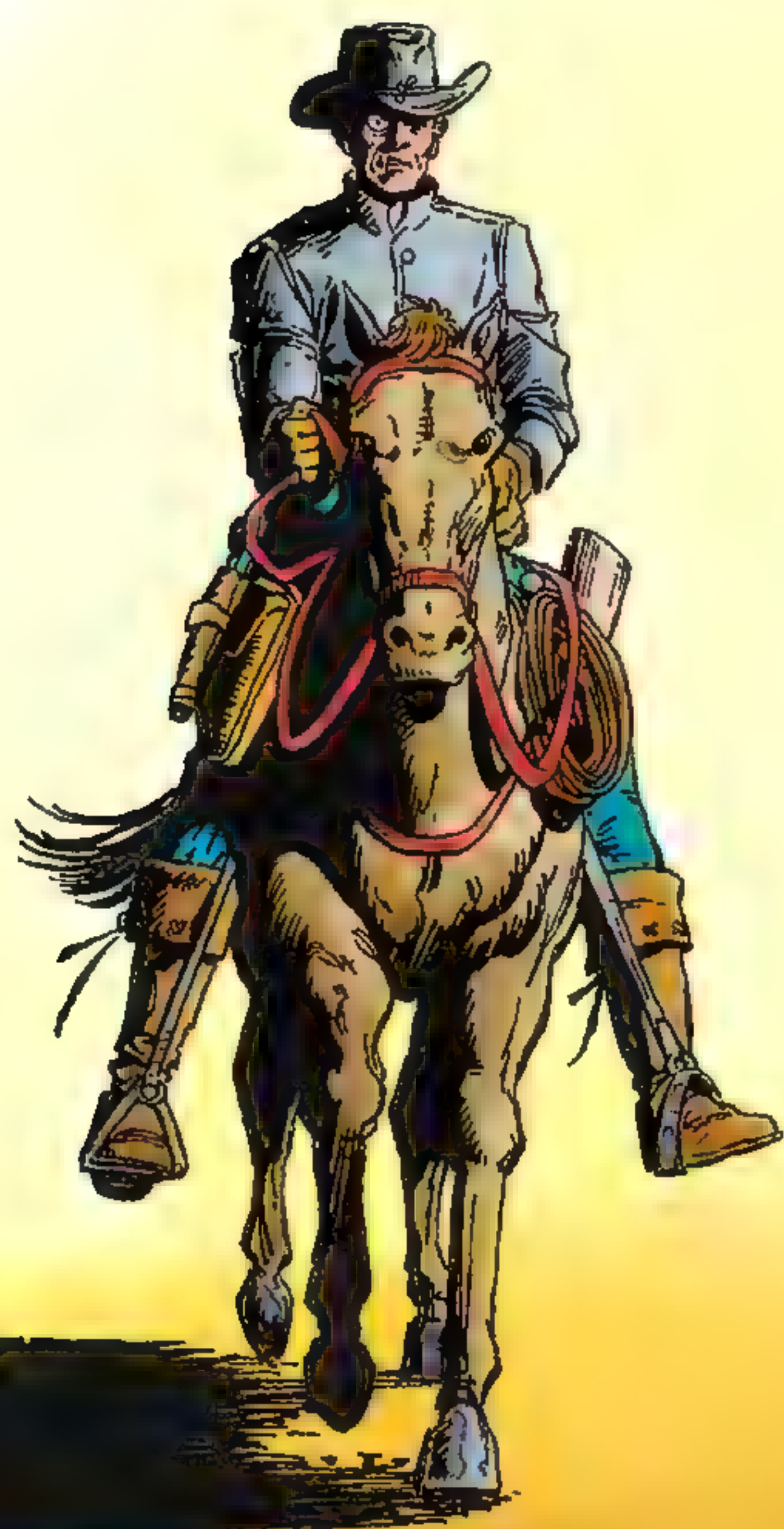
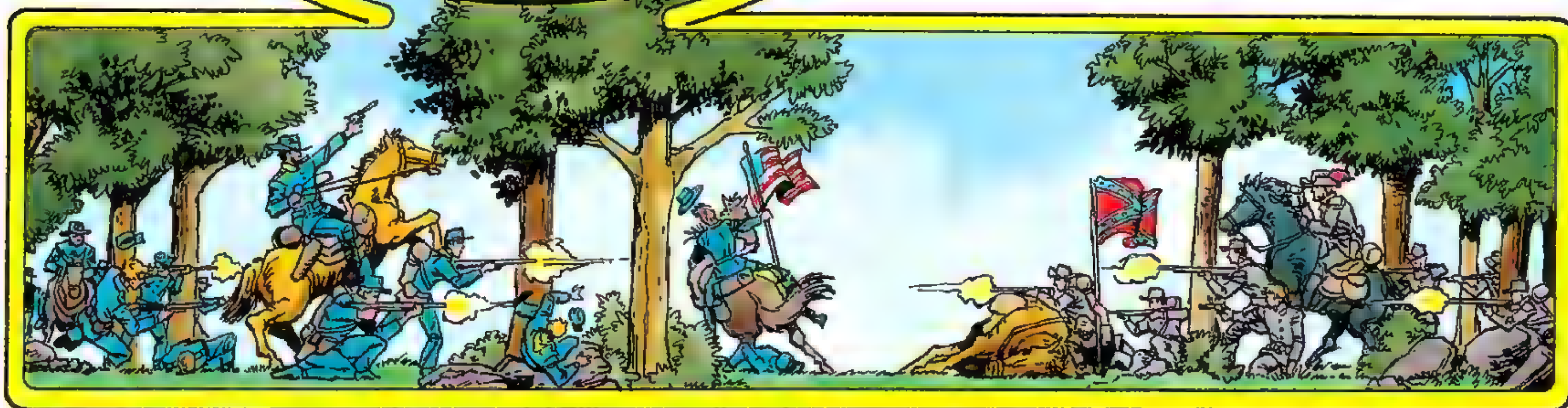


And when America revolted against British tyranny, thousands of loyal men and women took arms against their far mightier foe. It was the courage of fighters such as Miss Liberty, Tomahawk and Dan Hunter that allowed America to gain her independence.





America was now free and her people began their trek west in vast wagon trains. One such train was attacked by the fierce Blackfoot Indians, and all the travellers were slain save one blue-eyed, red-haired infant. This child was raised by the Indians to become Firehair.

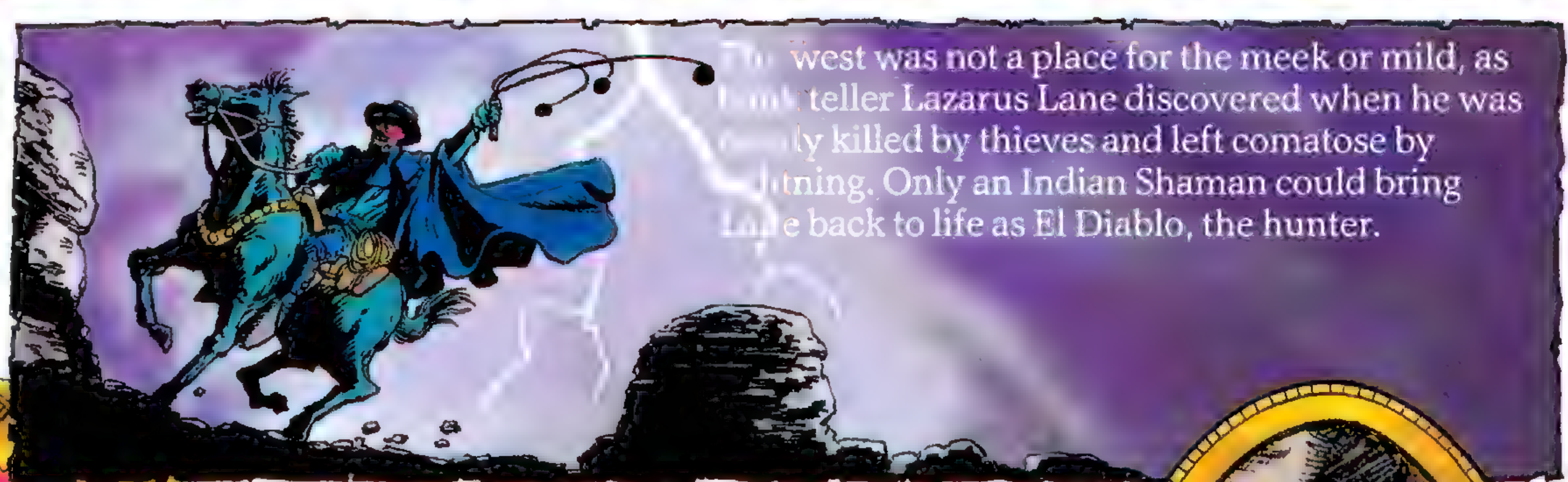
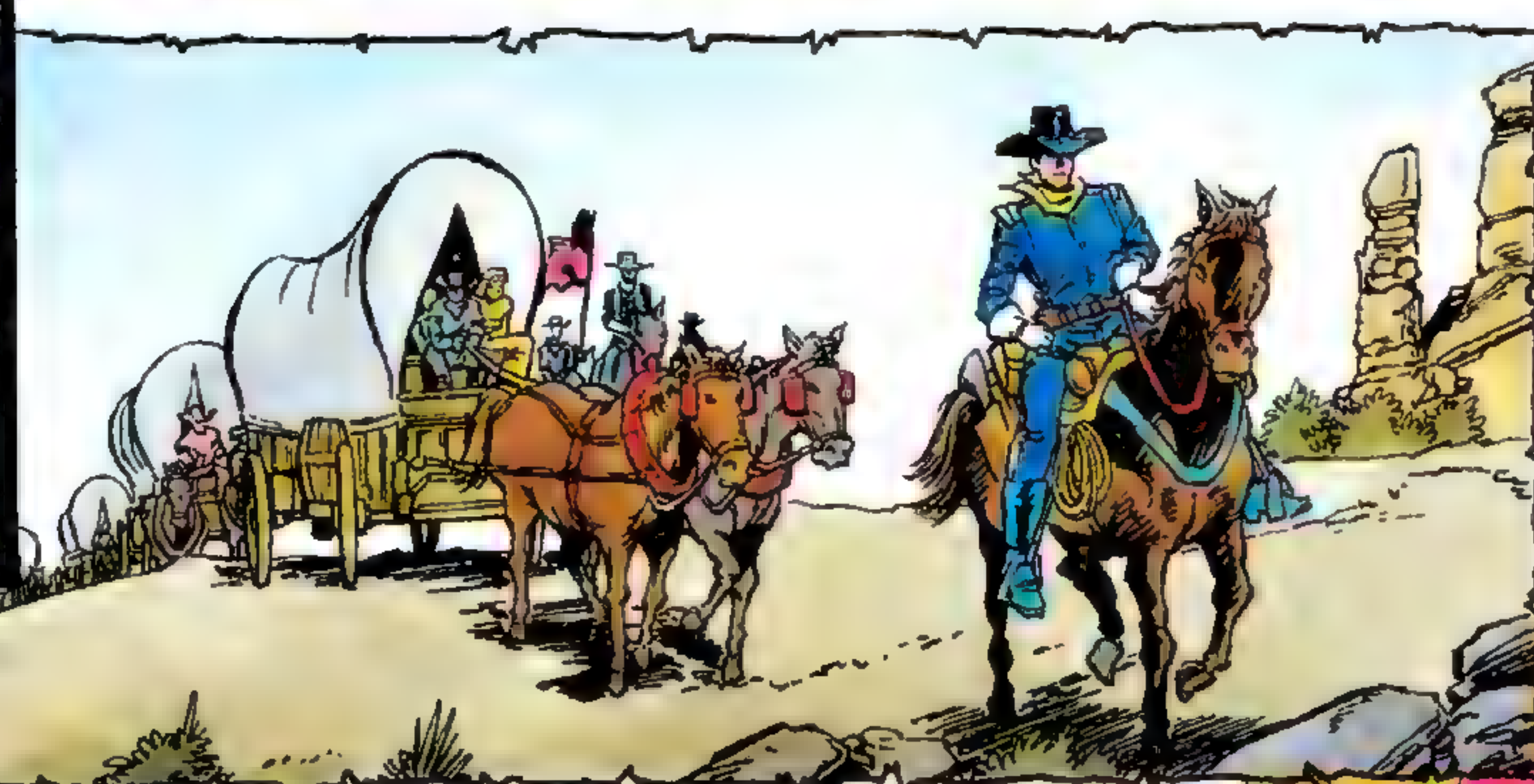


The 1860s saw America torn apart by civil war. For five bloody years brother fought brother, but at last the war ended, and its soldiers returned home to rebuild their emotionally shattered lives. Some soldiers, knowing little more than fighting, continued to live by the gun. Those who strayed from the law were hunted down, often by other former soldiers. Jonah Hex was a bounty hunter: among the very best...and certainly the most dangerous.





More and more Americans moved from the Eastern shores to settle in the vast and untamed west. This was a time of hope where risks would be taken and lives would be lost in pursuit of the American dream. But still they came, first by wagon, then by train.



The west was not a place for the meek or mild, as bank teller Lazarus Lane discovered when he was killed by thieves and left comatose by lightning. Only an Indian Shaman could bring Lane back to life as El Diablo, the hunter.



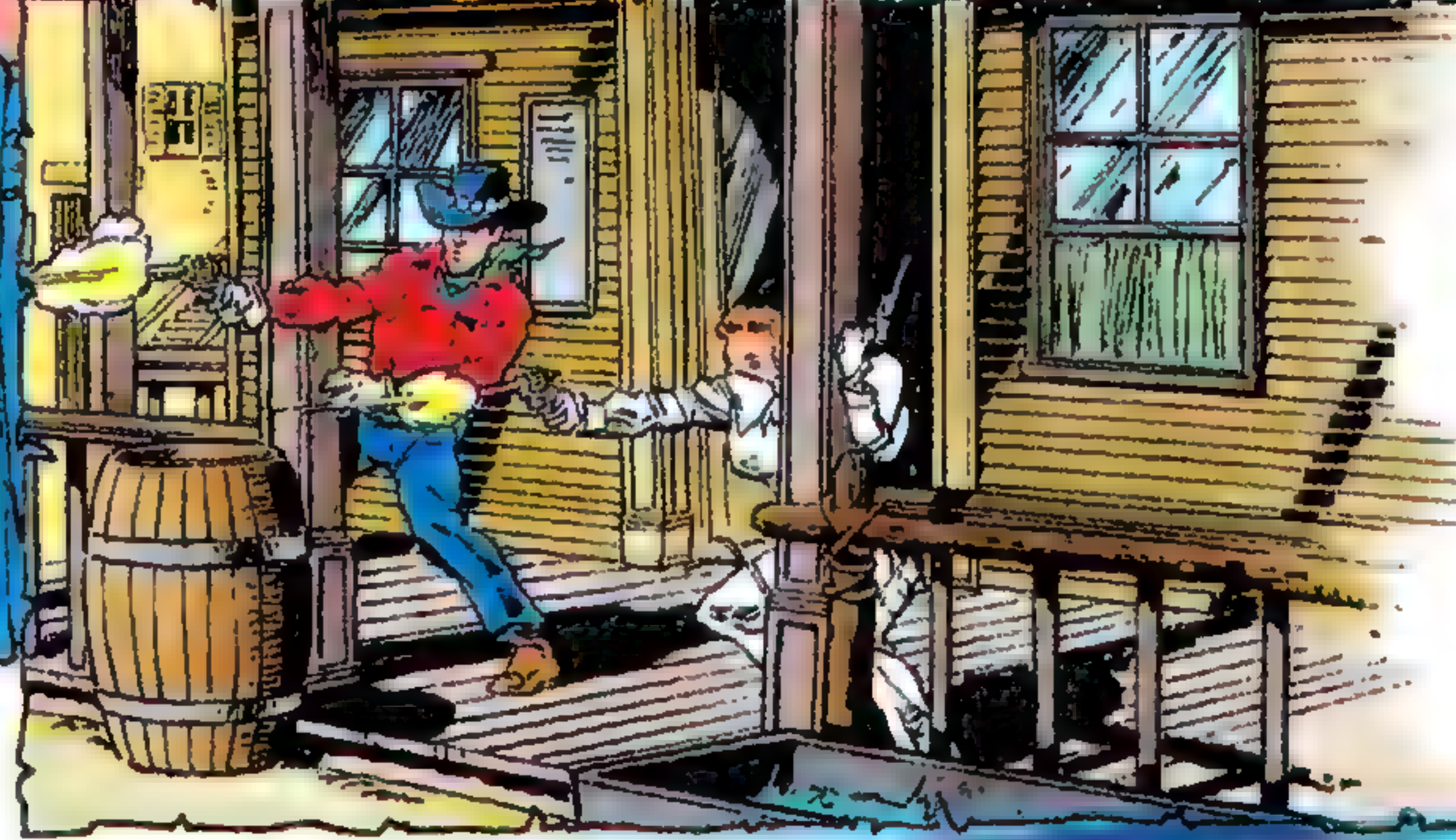
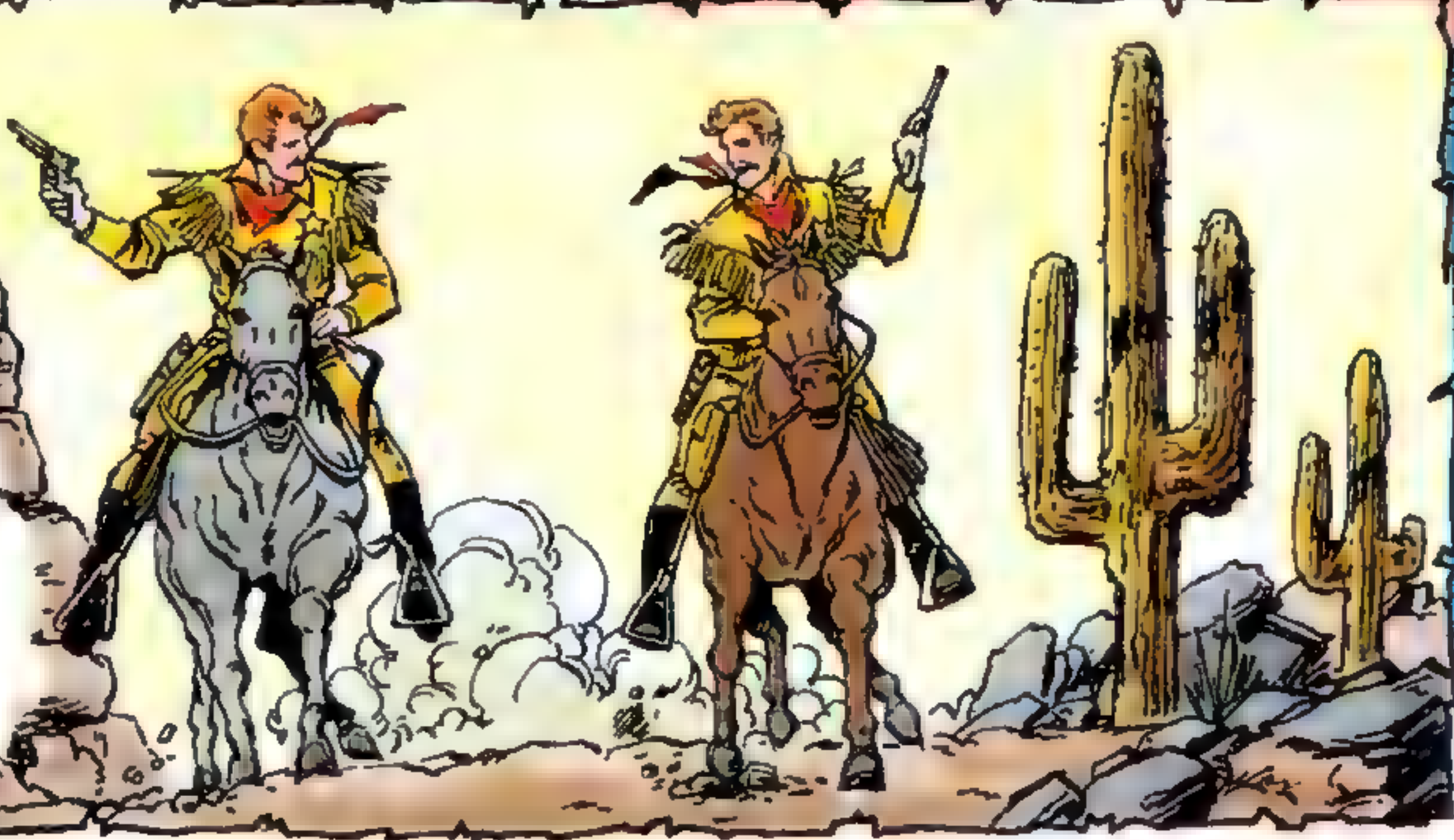
They came from every corner of the planet: the friendly adventurers such as Bat Lash who looked upon the west as a source of income, to Scalphunter who was not at home amongst white man or Indian.



Pow Wow Smith, inspired by the stories of the legendary warrior Super Chief, became the first of the Indian lawmen, and the avenging woman known only as Cinnamon became the first female law officer of the west.



As more people migrated, vast towns rose where years before there was only desert. Into these towns and cities came the outlaws. Without the law to protect the innocent, men such as the Trigger Twins risked their own lives to preserve the peace. This makeshift justice served until the true law came west.

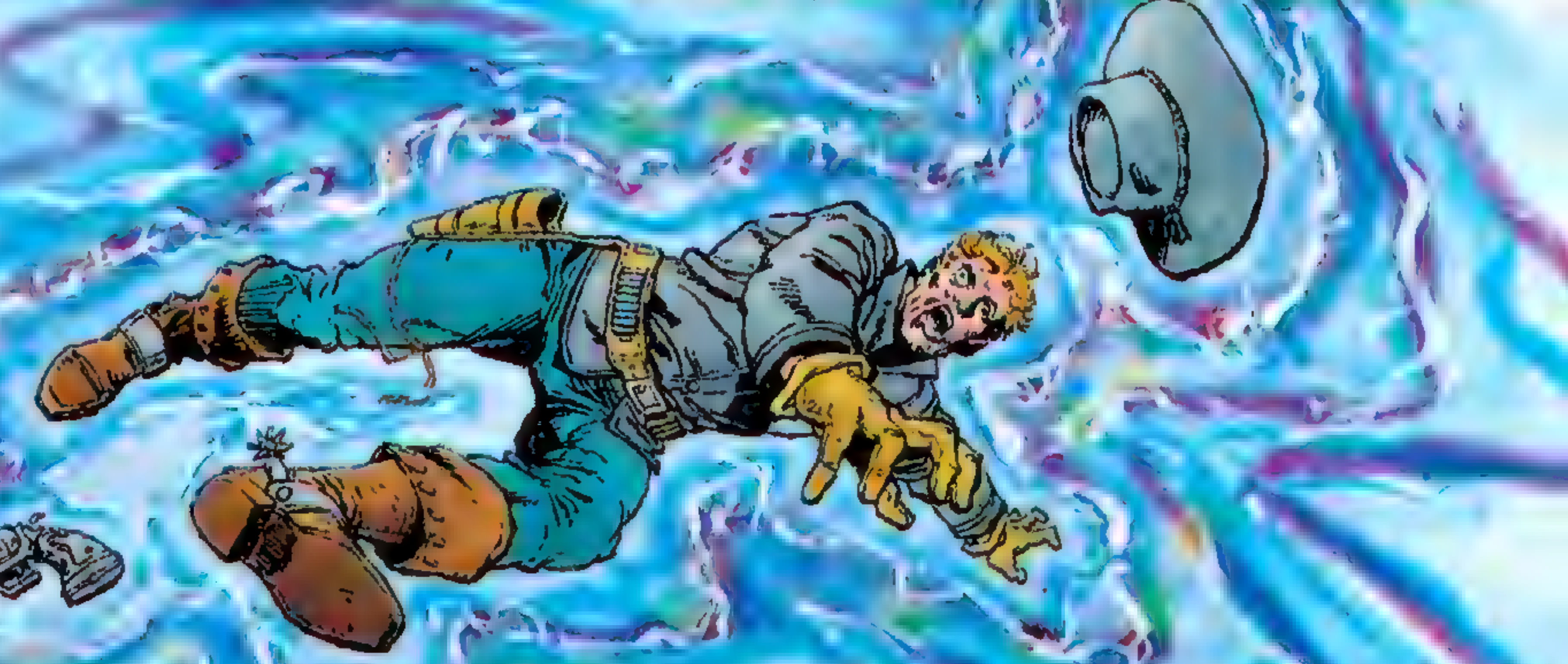


With each new territory annexed to the United States, the law finally followed to tame the wild west. However, not even sheriffs and U.S. marshals could do the job alone, so they relied on professionals such as Johnny Thunder and Madame .44 to give them a helping hand.



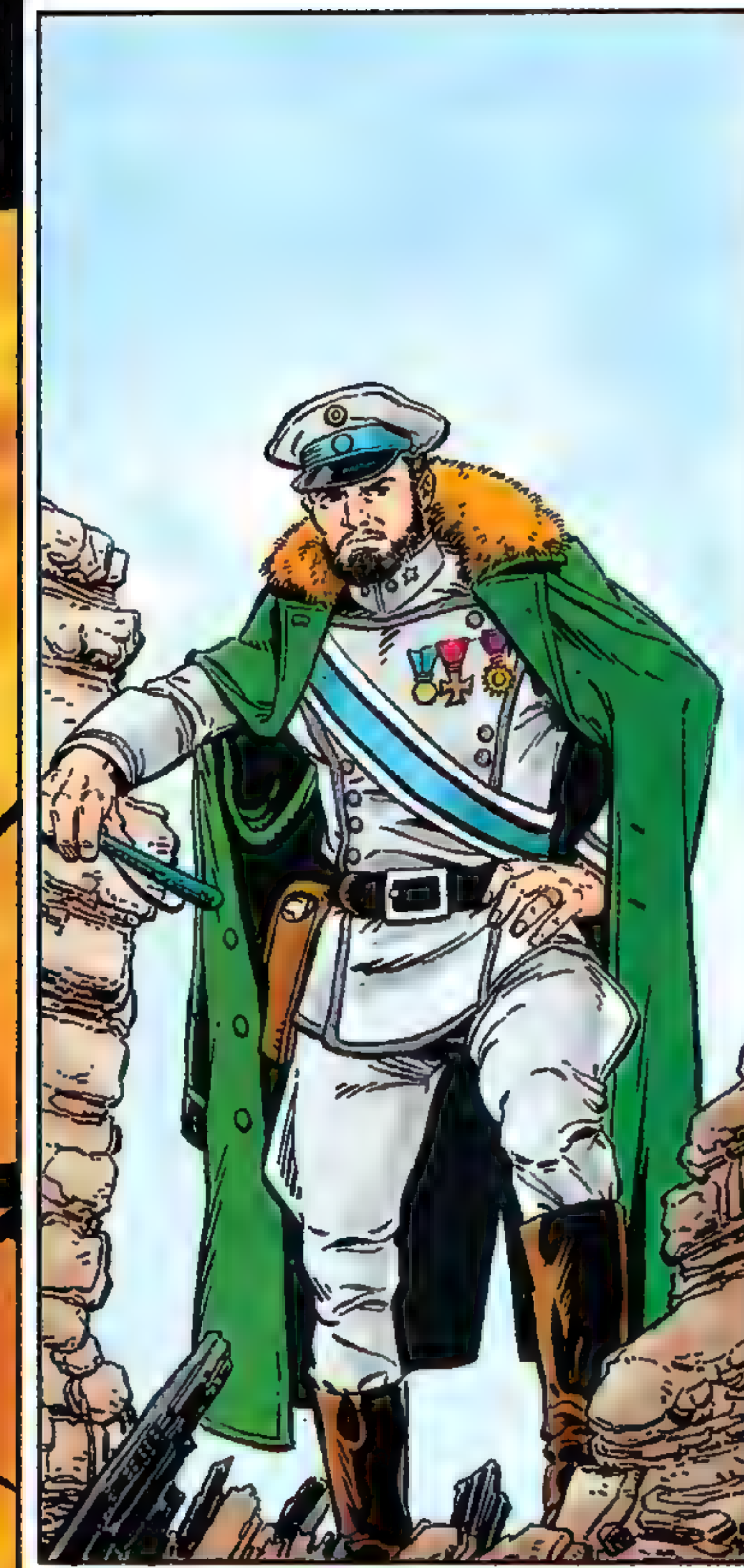
The west was being settled, but as throughout history, into the ordinary came the bizarre. The Indian Strong Bow found a spatial warp which turned him into a warrior of two worlds.

In the year 1875, the feared bounty hunter Jonah Hex was suddenly transported through time to reappear in the year 2050 A.D. Torn from the untamed west, the gunman found himself in a war-torn world gone mad.



The nineteenth century came to an end as the world made its greatest leap forward. From the horse and wagon came the railroad, then the first automobiles, and finally the airplane. From a world lit by oil lamps came electricity, but with all the advancements in science, man's lust for power continued unabated.

War is an eternal struggle between conflicting beliefs best symbolized, perhaps, by the battles between the Immortal Man and Vandal Savage, whose war has been waged since the dawn of man.



Battles were no longer confined to the ground to be fought by soldiers sloshing through mud. Now war was brought to the skies and its warriors were men adhering to a code of honor. This was called the war to end all wars, and men such as Steve Savage, the Balloon Buster, as well as thousands of others fought hard to make that saying true.



Wars are created by politics, while the warriors who fight in them, even foes such as Hans von Hammer the Enemy Ace, are people no different from any other.

There were six Brother Bloods before him, each living to their hundredth year, each one then slain by his own son. The Church Of Brother Blood prospered in Zandia, a Baltic country populated by the dregs of society. For protection, the thieves and murderers, the terrorists and ex-dictators, all donated great fortunes which financed Blood's Church throughout the world.

As more and more believers came to worship in the Church of Blood, Brother Blood's power grew, for Blood was an emotion vampire—living and growing ever stronger from the fervent worship bestowed him.



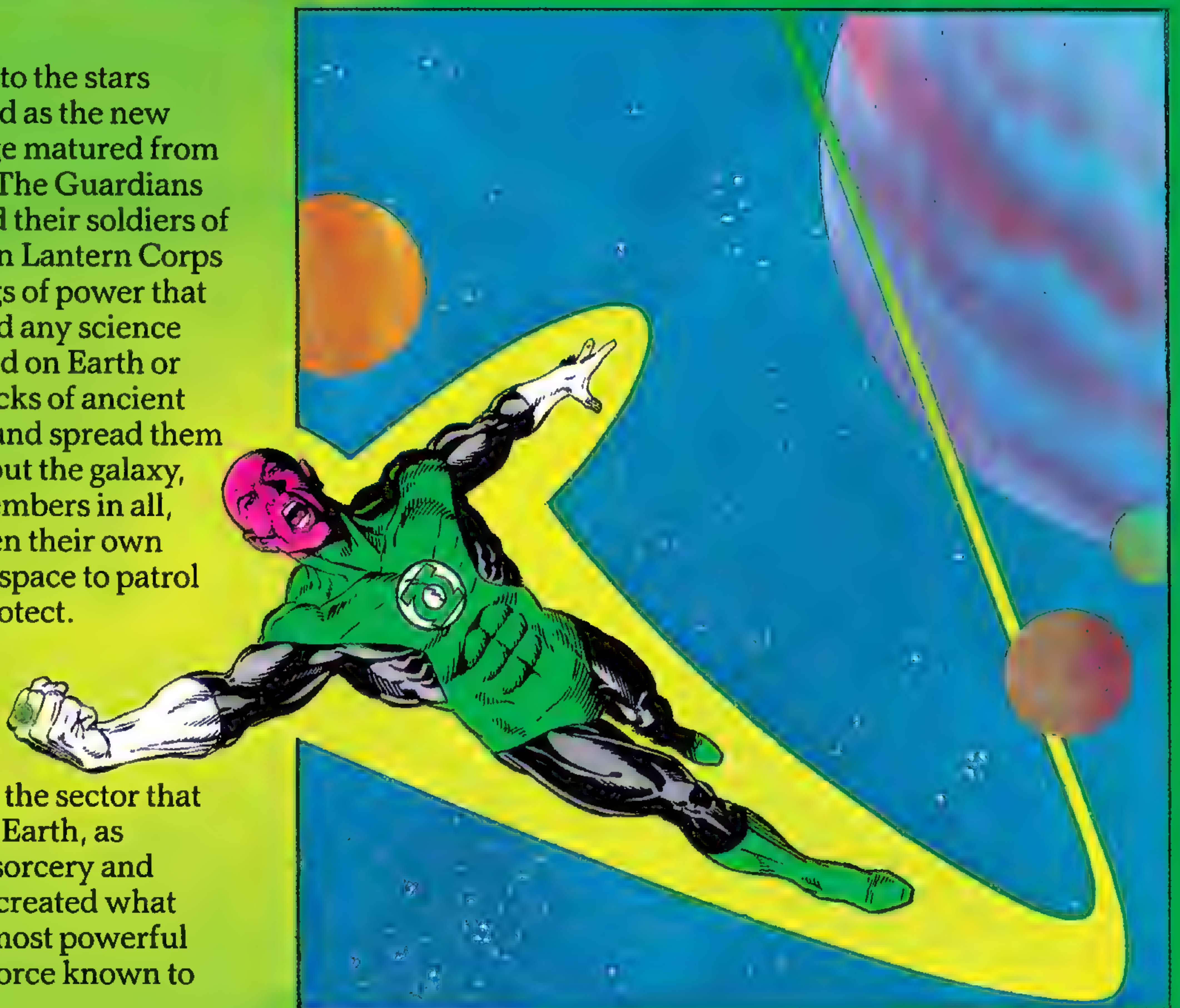


The end of World War One marked a new beginning for the Heroic Age. Science ruled, and even with the worldwide economic crash in 1929, society advanced at a rate unknown to man.

Yet into this world of science and technology, into this new age of industrialization, the arcane continued to thrive. One such practitioner, called Dr. Occult, combined the modern sciences of detection with the dark forces from times past.

Our link to the stars continued as the new heroic age matured from infancy. The Guardians equipped their soldiers of the Green Lantern Corps with rings of power that surpassed any science developed on Earth or the magicks of ancient Atlantis and spread them throughout the galaxy, 3,600 members in all, each given their own sector of space to patrol and to protect.

Abin Sur patrolled the sector that included Earth, as science, sorcery and the stars created what was the most powerful warrior force known to man.



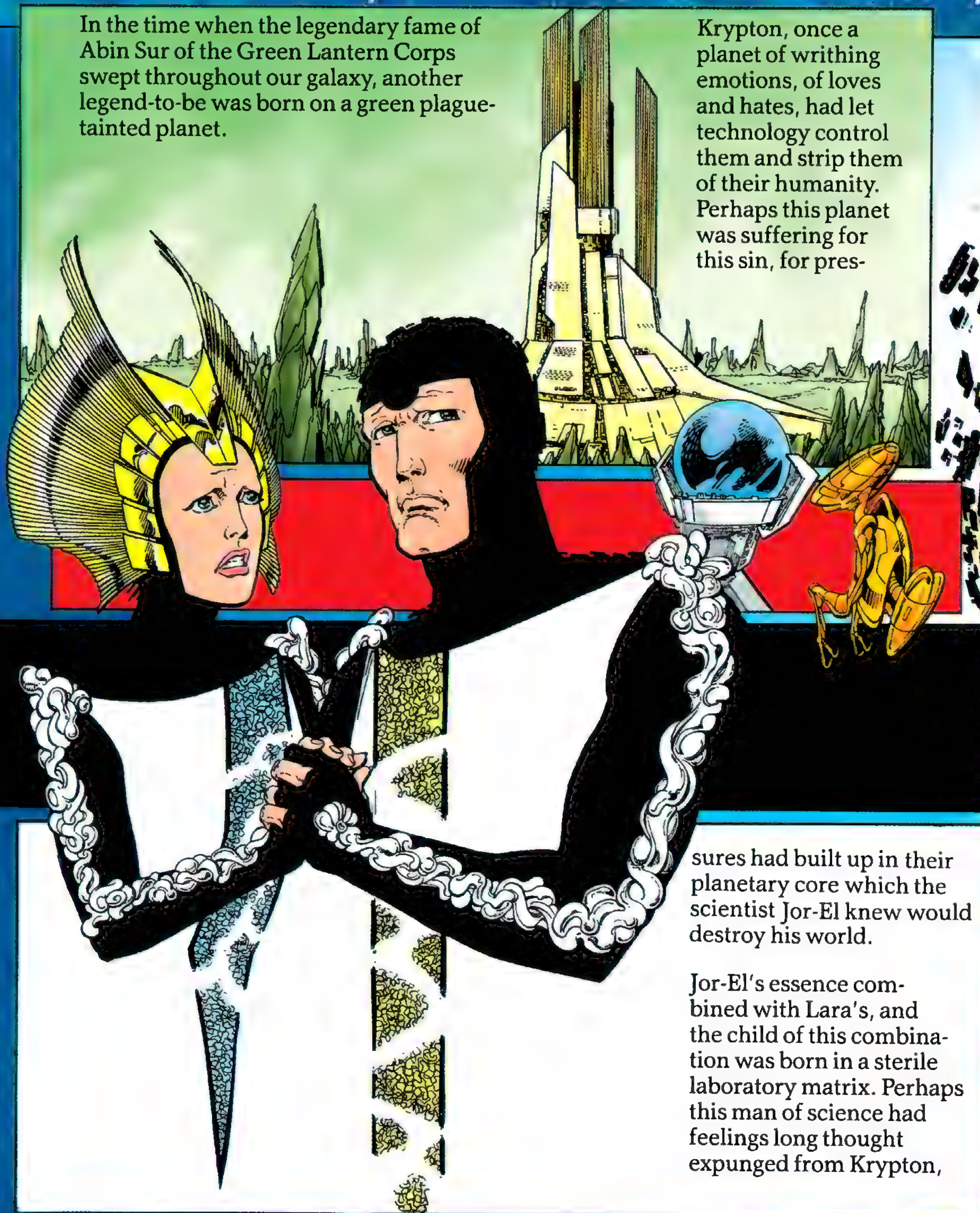
but he knew his son, the baby Kal-El, must not die with his world. The incubation matrix was outfitted with hyper-light drive, and as Krypton died, victim of its own inhumanity, her last son was sent to Earth where he would become the greatest hero of all. Perhaps this last act of a dying, sterile world, this last act of love, would redeem a world which had ceased to breathe long before its actual destruction.

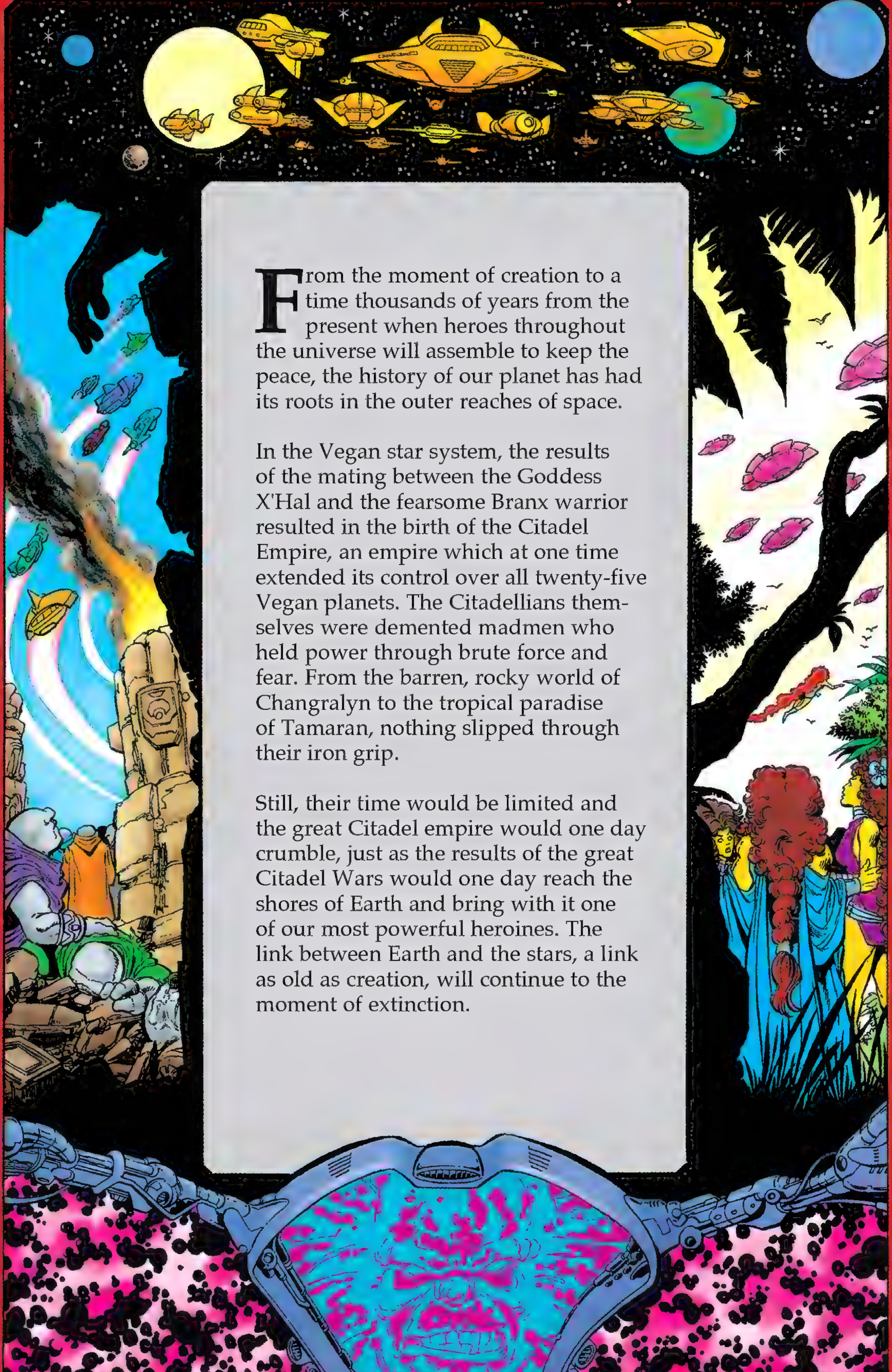
In the time when the legendary fame of Abin Sur of the Green Lantern Corps swept throughout our galaxy, another legend-to-be was born on a green plague-tainted planet.

Krypton, once a planet of writhing emotions, of loves and hates, had let technology control them and strip them of their humanity. Perhaps this planet was suffering for this sin, for pres-

ures had built up in their planetary core which the scientist Jor-El knew would destroy his world.

Jor-El's essence combined with Lara's, and the child of this combination was born in a sterile laboratory matrix. Perhaps this man of science had feelings long thought expunged from Krypton,





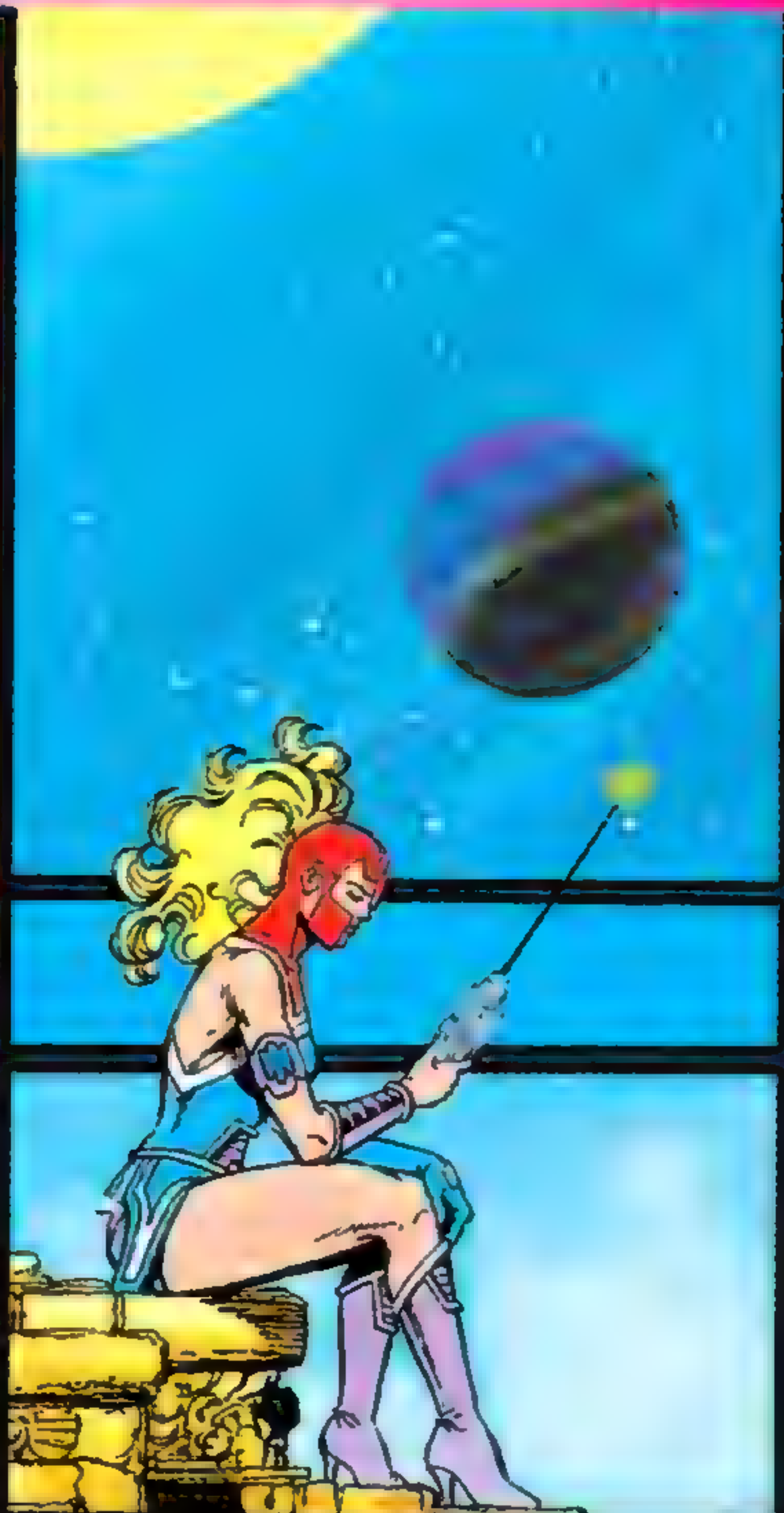
From the moment of creation to a time thousands of years from the present when heroes throughout the universe will assemble to keep the peace, the history of our planet has had its roots in the outer reaches of space.

In the Vegan star system, the results of the mating between the Goddess X'Hal and the fearsome Branx warrior resulted in the birth of the Citadel Empire, an empire which at one time extended its control over all twenty-five Vegan planets. The Citadellians themselves were demented madmen who held power through brute force and fear. From the barren, rocky world of Changralyn to the tropical paradise of Tamaran, nothing slipped through their iron grip.

Still, their time would be limited and the great Citadel empire would one day crumble, just as the results of the great Citadel Wars would one day reach the shores of Earth and bring with it one of our most powerful heroines. The link between Earth and the stars, a link as old as creation, will continue to the moment of extinction.



As the Citadel Empire expanded through the Vegan Galaxy crushing one foe after another, the young baby Kal-El hurtled through space toward Earth.



Kal-El's ship crossed the paths of other worlds which would one day be inextricably tied in with Earth's heroic history. From Thanagar to Rann, from the rings of Saturn to the desolate caverns of Mars, all these worlds and more would affect the Earth's greatest age of heroes.



An Heroic Age was certainly needed, for the Earth was soon to be plunged into a terrible worldwide war.



The War had begun in Europe but its cancerous growth had yet to engulf America.

What would become known as The Golden Age of Heroes began in 1938 with the advent of Zatara the Magician, the Crimson Avenger, and the American called Hop Harrigan.

The world was changing, becoming darker, grimmer. Into this would emerge such heroes as The Sandman and the size-changing Doll Man.

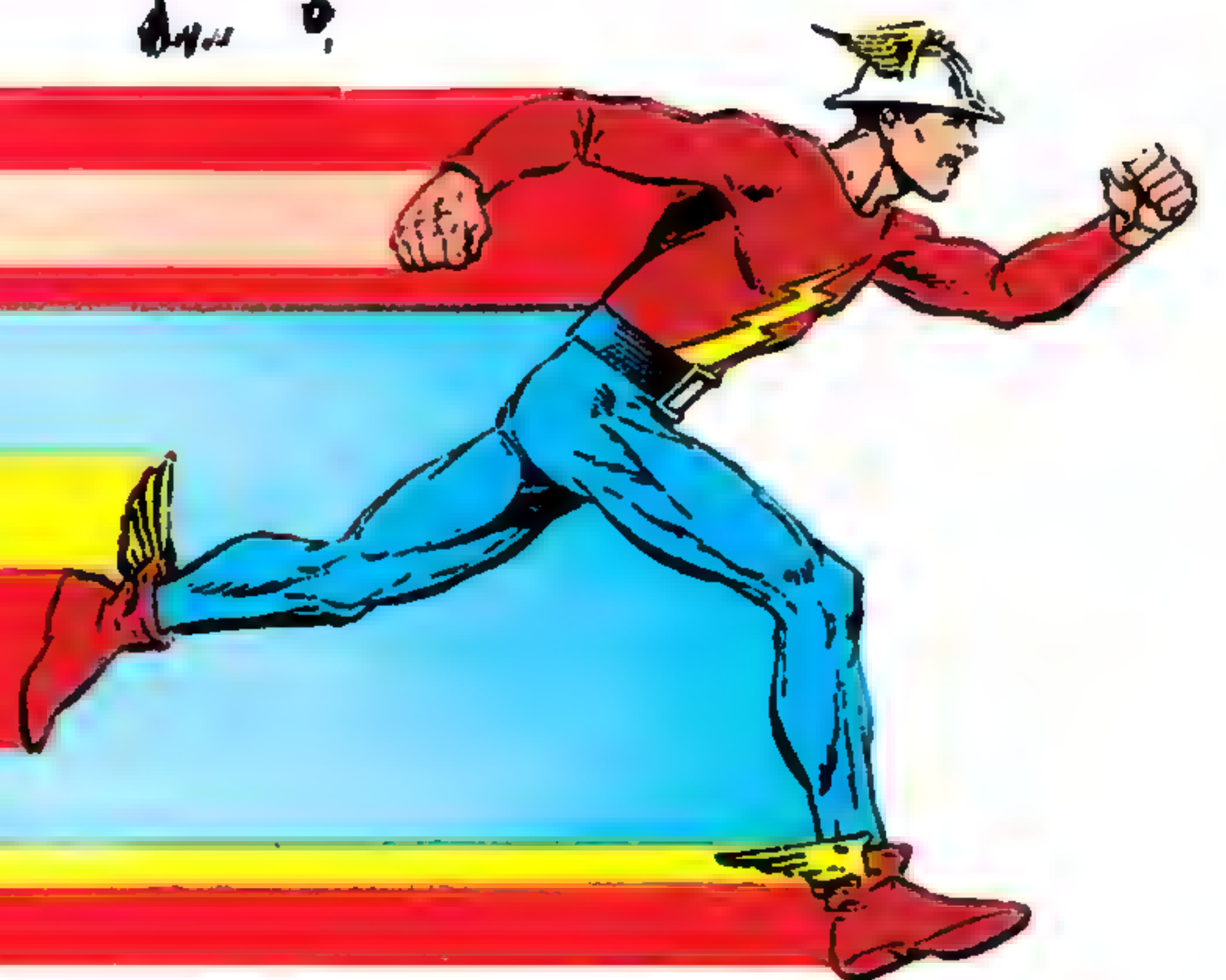


Long before America joined the war, many Americans took the side of the Allied nations in their desperate fight for freedom. Steel, the Indestructible Man, was one such hero who sacrificed his own welfare to help those oppressed by Nazi Tyranny. There were others, men without special powers and abilities, men who believed in freedom and who soon joined with their European brothers in the battle for peace.

All these men and women, costumed and uncostumed, became true heroes in this most horrible of wars.

But not all heroes went off to fight in Europe. Many remained home in America as she emerged from a debilitating depression to find herself heading toward the ever-encroaching Second World War.

With the emergence of specially powered heroes such as The Flash, the world's fastest man, came their very opposites: men and women with powers of their own who used their special abilities for evil.





Prince Khufu of Egypt and Shiera, the woman he loved, and his foe Hath-Set were reincarnated many thousands of years after their deaths. In this wartorn world Khufu and Shiera fought modern crimes with weapons from the past.



Reincarnation... rebirth... a theme that would repeat itself many times throughout this heroic age and the next.

Jim Corrigan, police detective, was killed in the line of duty, but his body returned from the dead in the form of the all-powerful Spectre.



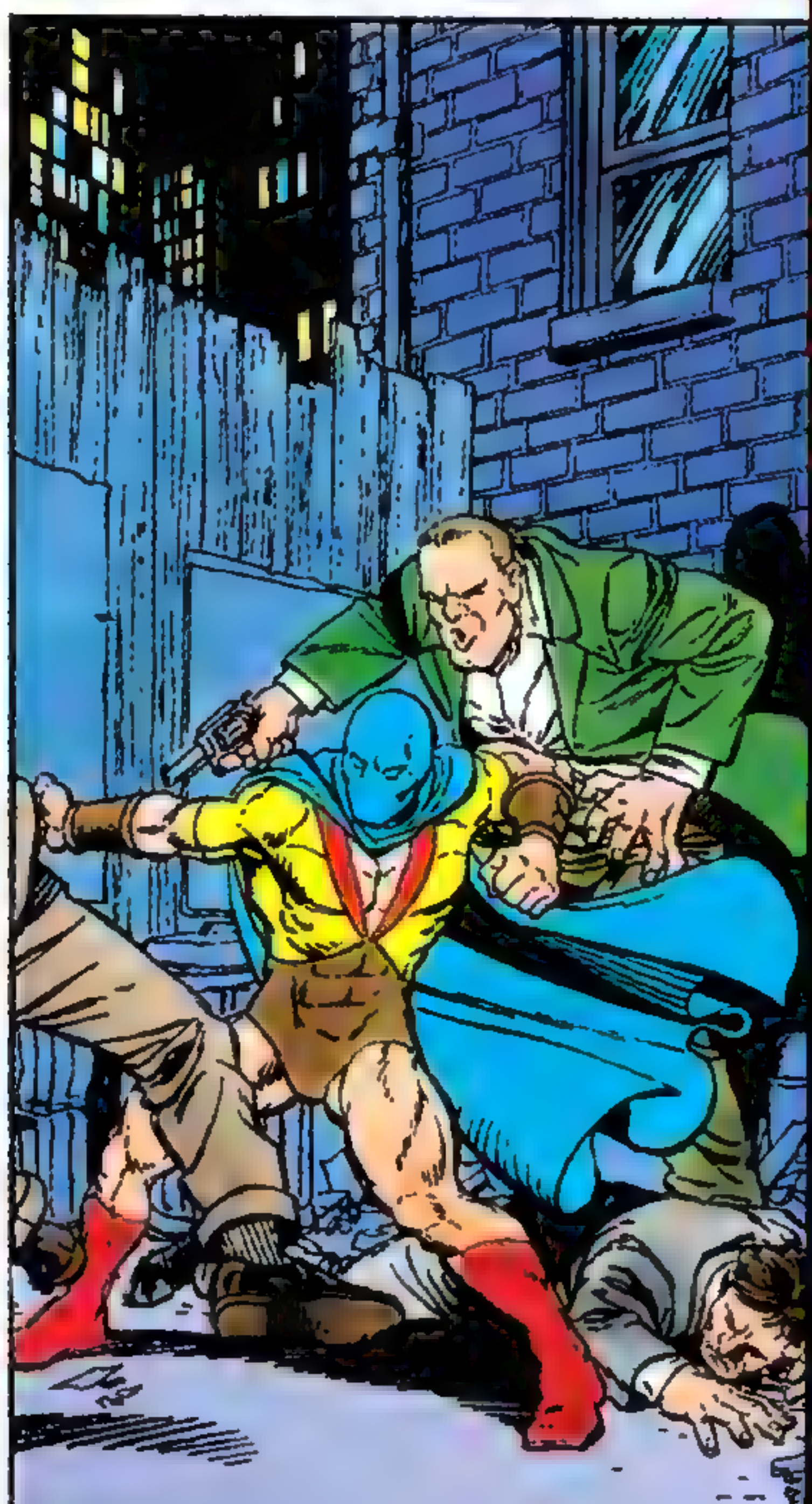
Johnny Thunder, born on the seventh day of the seventh month in 1917 and given control over a mystic Thunderbolt, used his special abilities and the thunderbolt's powers to battle crime in America.



Chemist Rex Tyler invented the Miraclo pill which gave him sixty minutes of unrivalled strength, which he used to fight crime as the heroic Hourman.



Other heroes emerged during this pre-war time. The Black Condor was a mutant with the power to fly...



The pint-sized Atom was an incredible athlete gifted with unbeatable boxing skills and super-strength. He used all his abilities in pursuit of criminals.

The ancient wizard Nabu, hibernating since the great Egyptian dynasties, was revived in the early 1940s. He

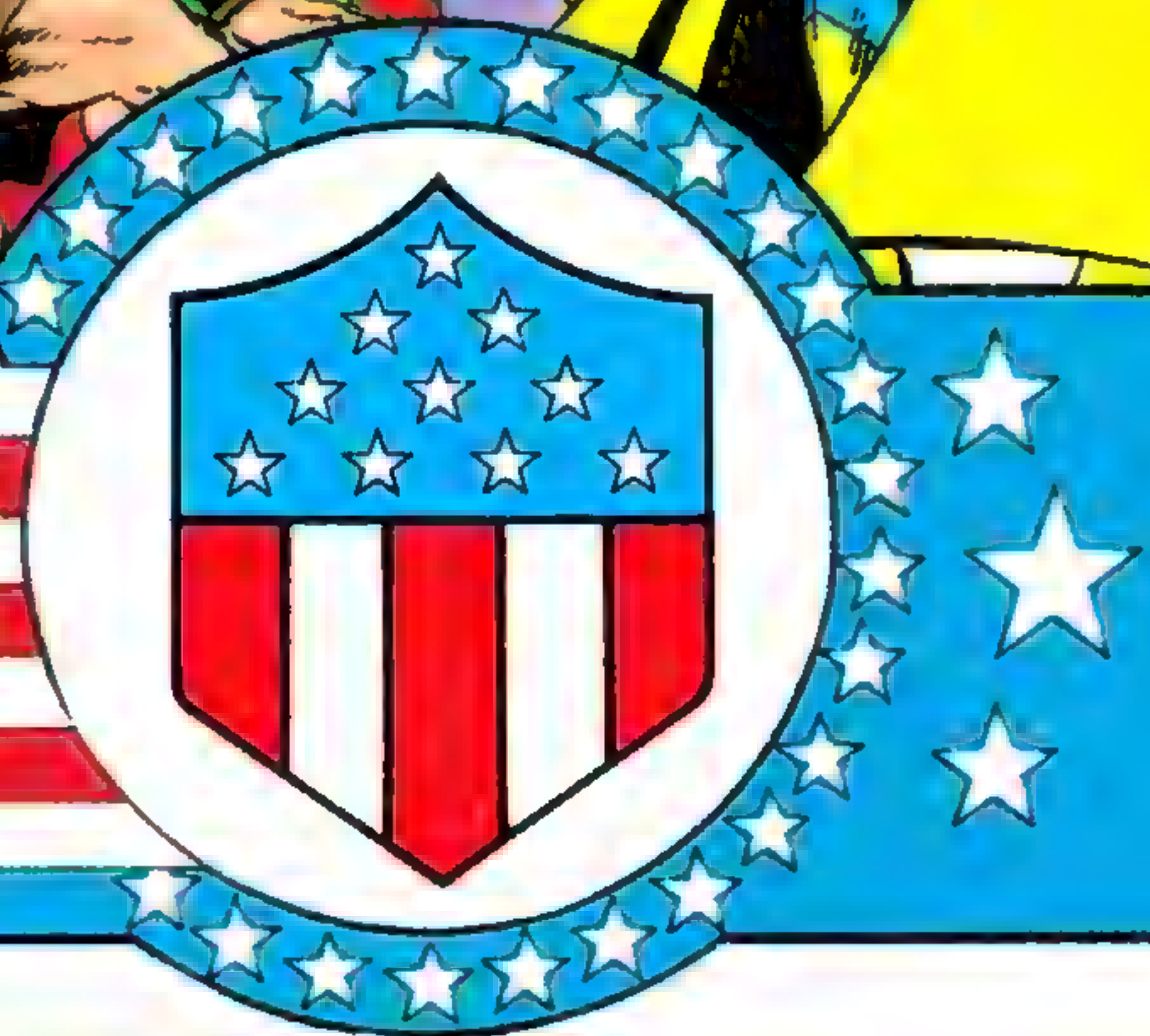


trained the young boy Kent Nelson in sorcery and presented him with a special helmet, cape and amulet. Nelson used his new-found powers to combat all evil in the guise of Doctor Fate.



Alan Scott had found a powerful lamp created from an unworldly green meteor, and made himself a mystic ring of power from it which he used to battle criminals. Not knowing of the Guardians or their warrior corps, Scott assumed the name Green Lantern.

The early 1940s gave birth to many heroes whose fame has lived on throughout time.



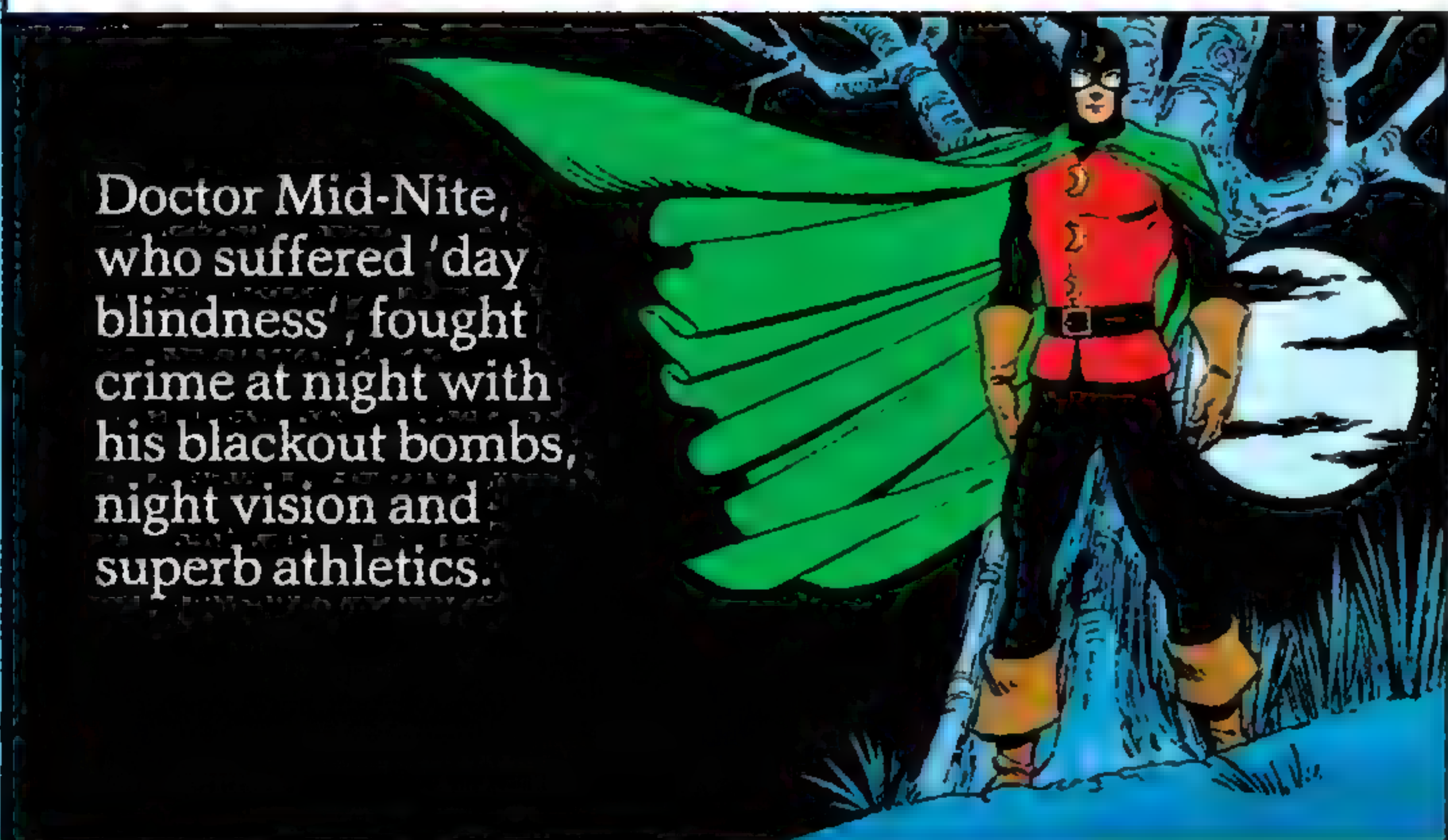
One by one the heroes appeared, and they were united by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to partake in a secret mission overseas.

From this early gathering in November of 1940 came The Justice Society of America, the greatest gathering of heroes in the history of man.

Not since the days of Mount Olympus had the world known of such power and wisdom. This was truly the Golden Age of Heroes.



Starman possessed the powerful gravity rod which enabled him to fly, fire bolts, and suspend the force of gravity.



Doctor Mid-Nite, who suffered 'day blindness', fought crime at night with his blackout bombs, night vision and superb athletics.

Perhaps they first appeared in answer to the Justice Society teaming of the 1940s, perhaps they emerged simultaneously, but as the crimes of ordinary thieves, bankrobbers and confidence men were handled more and more by police authorities, the special-powered villains of these early years banded together to create an unstoppable force of evil. This Injustice Gang of America wreaked havoc throughout the country, finding themselves in regular battle with the Justice Society.





When, on December 7th, 1941, the Japanese armed might attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, America entered the war. President Roosevelt brought forth

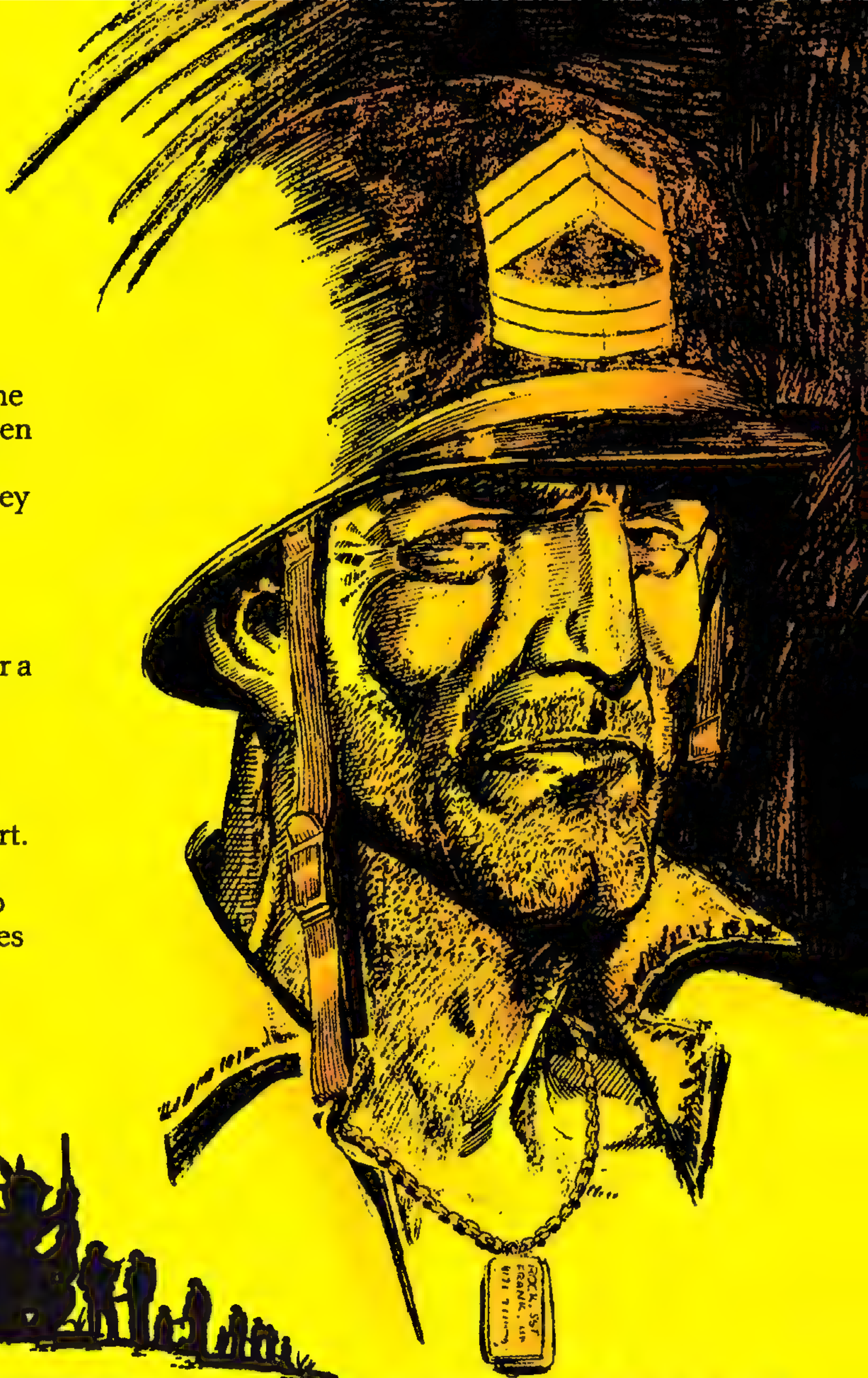
all the various heroes and asked them to form one single, all powerful group. This was the birth of the All-Star Squadron.

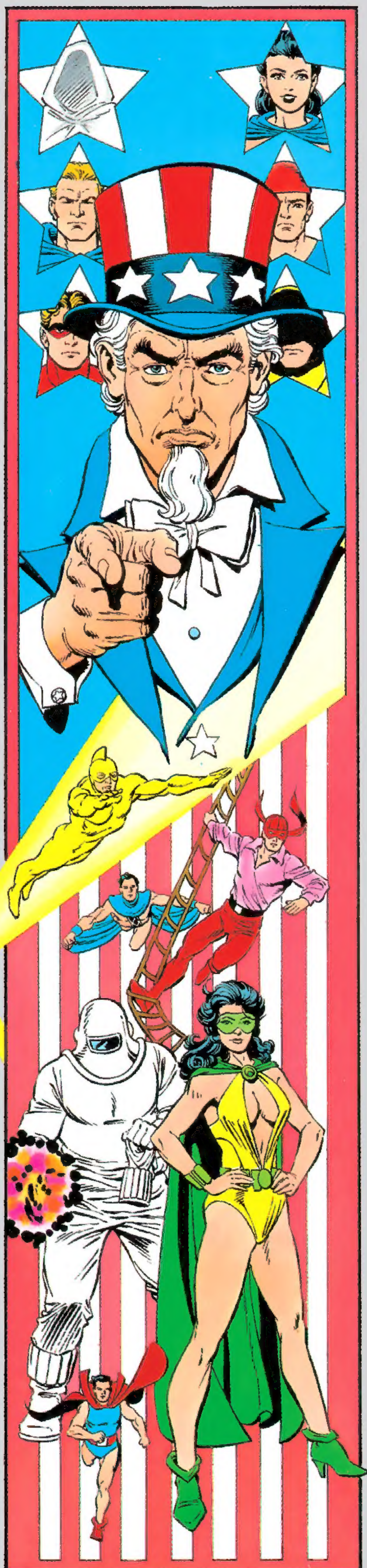


Not all the heroes had special powers, not all were given abilities which would render them invulnerable or immortal. Often the heroes came from the oppressed, those who fought back to make the world safe once more. One such man took the name

Blackhawk after he watched his family killed in the German invasion of Poland. Blackhawk assembled an international team of six who each had been a victim of Axis madness. Together, The Blackhawks flew across Europe, Africa and Asia and battled for democracy.

But the real heroes of the war were not those men and women who donned special costumes. They were the Americans and British, the French and Australians, the ordinary people who joined their nation's armies in the fight for a free world. These men and women fought in khaki and greens, marched through winds and rains, up muddy hills and across parched desert. These soldiers risked — and many lost — their lives, and to them all specially gifted heroes bow in reverence.

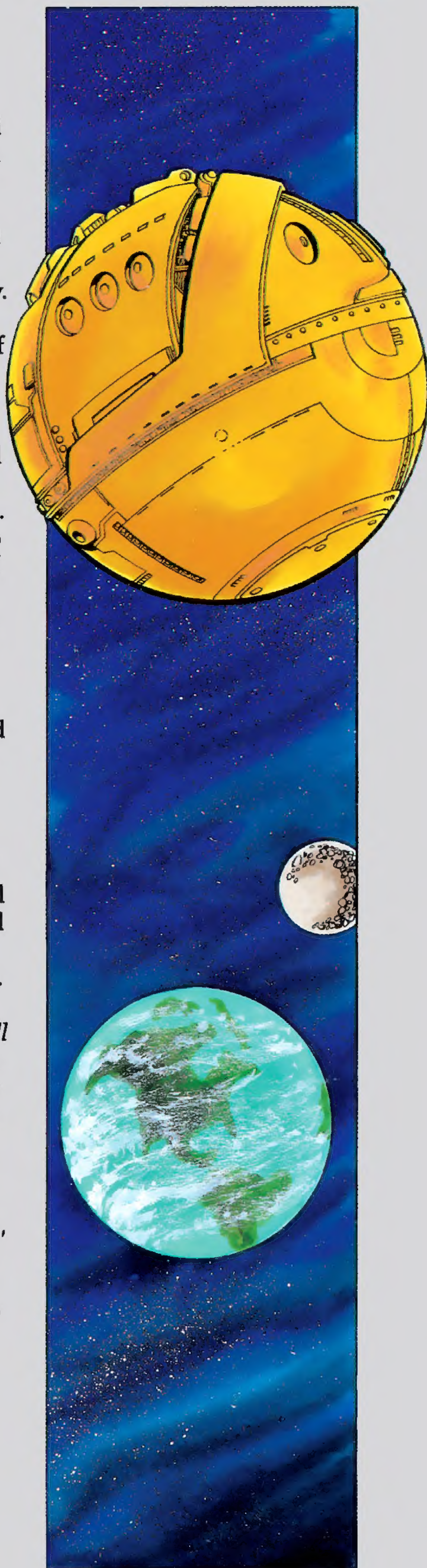




Throughout the history of the World there were freedom fighters, and this is their history, whether uniformed or not, whether powered or ordinary. And so ends Book One of the history of the Heroic Ages. I have been able to place them chronologically and thus show a continuity of events. The immortals who lived at the dawn of time returned throughout history, affecting man and his progress. The sinking of a seemingly unrelated island will have its effects seen in Book Two.

What began many years in the past will be remembered and acted upon many centuries from now. What affects what is and what *will be*. This, more than any other reason, is why this history of the universe is needed. To look at the heroic age without perspective, to understand one element without seeing the whole, is to do it a vast injustice.

Our tale has but begun.



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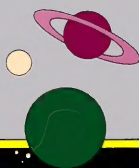
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